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A CHINESE FAMILY

The Spirit of the Orient

By George William Knox

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Introductory
America and the East

THE EVENTS of the last ten years have aroused the American people to a new interest in the affairs of the Far East. The United States has become a "world power" in a new sense, and its people know that they cannot longer isolate themselves. Whatever may be our judgment as to the wisdom of the course pursued, we must accept accomplished facts. Not only have we the great Pacific seaboard, which alone would make Asia of prime importance to us, but we have acquired the Sandwich Islands and the Philippine Archipelago. Thus we seem to have penetrated the Orient and to have numbered ourselves among its peoples, so that the coming decades are certain to be filled with questions of the highest and most lasting importance

to us and to our Asiatic neighbors. Politics, commerce, science, religion, art, literature, social customs, the economic situation, are all to be profoundly affected. Doubtless within a century our Asiatic relations will be at least as great as our interests in the lands across the Atlantic.

Already we face a situation of world-wide importance, for we are attempting a new experiment. European powers have established empires in the East repeatedly, ruling over vast populations by force. Some of these empires have been benevolent and some have been greedy and unscrupulous, but in all alike the fundamental principle has been government by a superior race through force.

In our Asiatic possessions we are adopting a different course, as the principles of the American nation are government by the people and for the people. We proclaim these principles in our dependencies, and we are at-

tempting to introduce universal education in preparation for their practical application. On every side we are told by experienced observers that this is an impossibility, for the people of the East must be governed, they cannot rule themselves, and that we are trying to graft our ideas upon a stock which cannot receive them. If this be so, not only will our present experiment be a failure, but our own political principles must be modified. Instead of asserting that government is of the people, by the people and for the people, we shall be obliged to add when the people are of Anglo-Saxon descent. At present, however, we are not convinced by the testimony of these experienced observers, but we are determined to persevere in our experiment.

This instance is brought forward merely as an illustration, one out of a long line of instances that might be adduced, showing how grave are the

problems before us. In the past we have boldly and crudely attacked our difficulties as they have presented themselves, with a strong confidence in the intellectual vigor and moral integrity of the people. This confidence on the whole has been justified, for our national problems have involved factors with which we were at least measurably acquainted. The new situation, however, demands the educating and informing of the people, for the problems to be solved include unknown factors. Nor can we pride ourselves upon our success in dealing with Eastern Asia hitherto, though only relatively simple questions have presented themselves.

It is true that our diplomatic history in the Far East has not been stained by such records as have disgraced the European powers. The story of diplomacy in China, with the wars which have grown out of it, is one which we can read only with profound shame.

As has been repeatedly pointed out, it has been the papers of the Chinese diplomats which have read like the statements of a Christian power, whereas the papers of Great Britain, France and Germany have ignored not only the teachings of Christ but the fundamental principles of international morality. No pretext has been too insignificant or too immoral to be made an occasion for aggression. The United States has not thus been involved in a tortuous, immoral and aggressive diplomacy, but it has none the less profited by all that has been extorted, and time and again its moral support has been given to the cause of the stronger. It has not been, one fears, our superior morality but the less pressing nature of our interests which has made us more reasonable, and, shall I add, more Christian.

For when our interests have been directly concerned, we have been not less open to charges of political im-

morality. We accepted an admission to China which was forced. We initiated diplomatic action leading China to seek admission to the sisterhood of nations. We framed treaties for an equality of rights on both sides, then shamelessly we violated our own treaties by act of Congress, and passed acts concerning the exclusion of the Chinese which remain our lasting disgrace. It is not argued here that Chinese coolies should not have been excluded, but it is merely pointed out that our Congress, under threat of losing the labor vote, passed laws of exclusion which violated our sacred treaties. It is also a matter of fact that the same substantial result could have been attained by consultation with the Chinese government and through a modification of the treaties. Our course in this matter was thus not only shameless but needless.

It is not fair to overlook extenuating circumstances. Neither the people of

Great Britain nor the people of the United States desired to do an injustice to the Chinese, but certain interests, in England those of trade, in America those of labor, were threatened, and the people in general were ignorant and therefore indifferent. This again is brought forward merely as an illustration of the kind of problem which awaits solution in the future. Since government is not only for the people but by the people, ignorance and indifference cannot be pleaded as valid excuses. As the statesman must know the problems before the government, as the manager of great business interests must know the conditions of his trade, so the American people must understand the problems with which they have to deal.

Probably in no other field have such efforts been put forth for the understanding of Oriental peoples as in that of religion. Missionaries have made the East their adopted home and they

have tried sympathetically to understand their neighbors. Such an understanding is indeed of even greater importance to the missionary than to the diplomat or the merchant. He must know and respect the peoples to whom he is to reveal his higher truth. But our new relations to the Orient have led to a twofold criticism of the possibility of missionary success. On the one hand, certain critics tell us that the "natives" are too debased for exalted Christian truth, and that the Asiatic cannot change his nature more readily than can the leopard his spots. All converts, we are assured, are hypocrites who desire worldly gain. On the other hand, other critics are telling us that the Asiatics already have religions of such exalted types and ethics so pure that they do not need our teaching in either field. Hence, according to these writers, it is an impertinence for us to carry our religion to Asia. Manifestly we must see with our

own eyes and understand for ourselves, when such opposed views can be given. The religious world, therefore, no less than the political and commercial, is interested in a completer understanding of the Far East.

This little volume is an attempt toward such an understanding. No observer can do more than report what appears to him. No student can master so vast a subject in all its complexities. It is only by the coöperation of many that we may hope to come to understand in a measure our topic, and it is necessary to this end that each writer should

> "... draw the thing as he sees it
> For the God of things as they are."

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I
The American Point of View

I

The American Point of View

"H East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat."

Mr. Kipling thus vigorously expresses the common opinion. Something separates the Oriental from the Occidental. It is not merely that our fashions are different, the clothes we wear, the houses we dwell in, the food we eat, our ways of play as our methods of work, but that there is a deeper separation in life and spirit. How seldom do we understand each other, or either Oriental or Occidental interpret aright the life of the other. A professor in the government college in Lucknow, who had spent years in India and who spoke the vernacular, once said to me, "None of us know these people. We do not understand their purposes nor their feelings. Before the

mutiny the residents supposed they understood them, and they trusted the people as they trusted themselves, and then suddenly, without warning, came the explosion. So now we do not profess to know, but we feel as if living on the thin crust of a volcano." I went out to the cantonments to service on Sunday and the splendid British regiments came to chapel fully armed, bringing their loaded guns into the building. For in the mutiny some troops were caught in church unarmed, and since that time no risks are taken.

This is the repulsive side of the contrast, but it has its charm also. The traveller who has exhausted the resources of the West, to whom America and Europe are an old story, finds himself in the home of romance when he enters the East. Its unfamiliarity is its charm, and who has wholly escaped its spell? Poetry, and tales, and art, and mystery have come from the

East, so that even the sight of the great ships engaged in the Eastern trade has been an inspiration. We love to emphasize the differences as we tire of the commonplace West. Travellers and authors flee to the Orient that their nerves may tingle with its freshness and novelty.

"But there is neither East nor West, Border,
nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face though
they come from the ends of the earth."

So Mr. Kipling continues, and we may ask at least whether the East after all is separated from the West when each seeks to understand the other. Doubtless the Spirit of the East differs from the Spirit of the West, else there would be no occasion for this book, but beneath them both is our common humanity.

Deep and wide is our separation, and strange to each other are the two great earth Spirits, and yet all men

are one. Could we creep for a while into each other's skin and look through each other's consciousness, we should feel at home. The greater part of life is the same for all. We have like bodies with their members and their senses, we are subject to the same influences of air and light and darkness and earth and sky. We have the same needs for food and drink and sleep and clothes. We alike are social in our being, and the great drama of life, with its beginning and ending, its pains and joys, its loves and hates, is the same for all, so that in no metaphorical sense, but in the most literal meaning of the words, we are one.

If we take a child of English birth and put it in an Eastern environment we shall not be able to distinguish it in mental traits from its comrades and neighbors. I knew a Chinese woman who was taken when an infant by a missionary and educated as his child

in his home, and none would know from her language, thought, character, or interests that she is not an American born. Or in less favorable circumstances, school-boys have been transformed in a few years so that they were strangers and foreigners in the land of their birth. All of us who have had prolonged experience with Orientals can recall such examples. No! It is not anything inherent or by heredity which separates us, nor can we look in this direction for our explanation of the Spirit of the Orient.

Besides, are we so different by descent? Our students do not know nowadays what to make of the word "race." When I went to school we were taught that there were such and such races with well-defined limits and boundaries, but scholars now have obliterated the boundaries. We do not know much about the tangled lines of race descent, but we do know that some of our ancestors long ago came out of Asia,

while some of their brothers remained in the ancestral home and others went south to India, and others perhaps far east to the Pacific. We also know that wave after wave of Asiatic population has flowed over Europe, until we should be perplexed to define a pure European, or on racial lines to distinguish East from West.

In the beginning of our historic times the differences were not felt as to-day. The Greek hated the barbarian, but he did not distinguish Oriental from Occidental and far down into the Christian era the influence of Asia upon Europe was great. How much we owe to that continent, what stores of philosophy and art and religion! How indeed shall the East be foreign to us, since our Saviour dwelt there and our prophets and sacred books are of it? Our Holy Land is in the Orient, and we cannot understand our scriptures without knowing something of its geography, customs and tongues. An

Oriental may be excused for not knowing the Occident, but we show ourselves unintelligent if we confess ignorance of the source of so much which is of our own inheritance.

There was no deep feeling of a continental difference when Alexander made himself an Oriental monarch, nor, long after, when St. Paul to the Greeks became a Greek. Possibly the sense of separation came with the dark ages, when the East was blotted out and forgotten, and Europe developed on independent lines. Not only was there separation, but antagonism, when Moslem was arrayed against Christian, and Europe came to know itself as one because united in arms against the Turk. An impenetrable barrier of religion and hatred interposed, and men did not so much as wish to understand their deadly foes. Behind the Mohammedan power, India and China were too far away to be well remembered, so that their rediscovery

at last was like the apparition of a new world.

The separation was not complete, it is true, for through the Moors something of enlightenment came to Europe, and missionaries and merchants attempted adventures in the East at infrequent intervals. But the exceptions did not change the rule, and intercommunication was not sufficient to influence the development of the two great sections of humanity along their divergent lines. It is not surprising that when at last in our own day the two civilizations are brought together they are strange to each other. Let two brothers be separated for a score of years and how unfamiliar they are grown. European and Asiatic were separated for more than forty generations, until religion, traditions, customs, and conceptions of the world all are different. No wonder that we must be reintroduced, and that time is needed before we settle down once

more into our ancient acquaintanceship. Besides, even in the old days, the acquaintance in the nature of the case was only partial. None then knew of any save the nearest neighbor, and the strangest things were believed of folks who were really near of place and blood. Only our time of marvels makes "the whole world kin" and renews on better terms the primitive unity, as at last it is possible for us to know "all kinds and conditions of men."

In this modern era an immense amount of strength and time has been given to the discovery of the East and to the scientific mastery of its facts. India, for example, is described in the volumes of the Imperial Census with a thoroughness that is admirable. China has been traversed in all directions, and in such a work as "The Middle Kingdom" we have a better summary of the people and their land than can be found in the Chinese language. Even

Tibet has now yielded its mysteries to the invader, while Burmah and Siam are no longer remote or unknown. With the same thoroughness the inner life of the people has been studied. It was English and French scholarship which opened the ancient religion of India again to the Hindus, and we understand Buddhism better than do the Buddhists. The long series of volumes, "The Sacred Books of the East," is only representative of a small portion of the labor expended upon the investigation of these ancient religious systems which enshrine the faith and hope of so large a part of mankind.

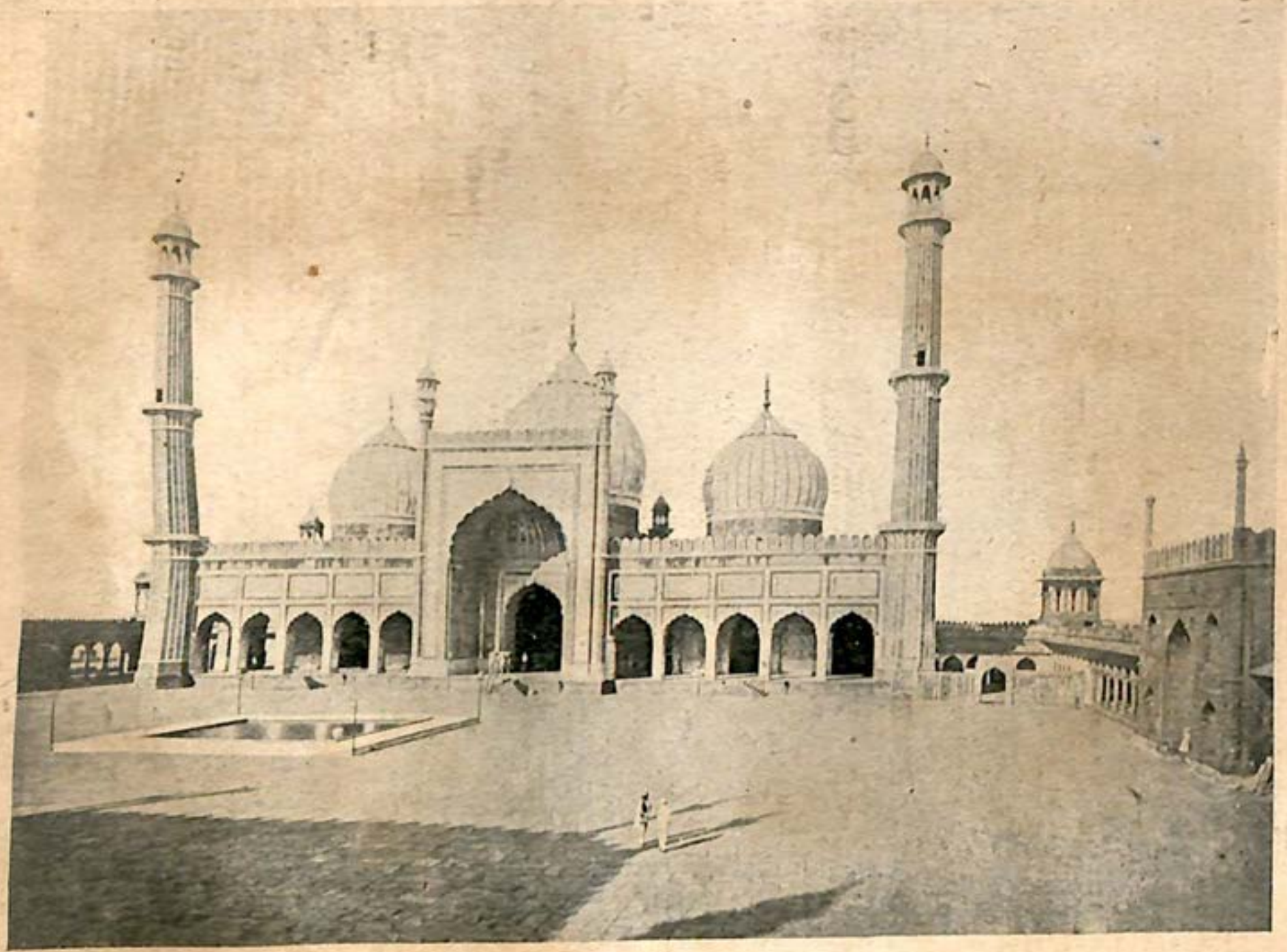
Doubtless we do not know the East. There are more worlds to conquer, and in regions already traversed much has been overlooked, much has been misunderstood, so that there are errors to be corrected and gaps to be filled up. Nevertheless our claim is valid,—that we have material at hand which makes it possible for the Occi-

dental to describe the Orient more completely, more justly, and more sympathetically than it has ever been described by its own sons.

We have written of "East" and "West" as if these terms stood for well-defined ideas. But we know that the "West" is not one, and we should be hard put to it were we forced to define the word. We are conscious of our differences, and hesitate to class together Englishman, Italian, Hungarian, Finn, Spaniard, South American, Frenchman, German, Russian and American. In what, pray, are we alike and how shall so mixed a multitude be put together over against the Orientals? In the East the differences are as great at least. What relationship has the Arab to the Hindu? Can we class together the Turk and the peace-loving, commercial Chinese? How widely separated again are the Koreans from their near neighbors, the Japanese? In India itself there is

a bewildering multitude of peoples and religions, some of them mutually hostile, with a hatred scarcely rivalled by the hatred of Jew and Russian. We can think of the East as one because we do not know it, as all Chinamen look alike to most Americans, the individual differences being overlooked. But to one familiar with the people their differing personalities are as striking as with ourselves. So it is with races. As our knowledge grows, the dissimilarity increases until we come to wonder that we could ever have thought all the dwellers in India to be alike, much less the differing races of the Asiatic continent. It is therefore only in the most vague fashion that we can speak of the "East" as an entity, or set it by way of contrast over against the "West."

The "East" used to mean western Asia, the classic lands of our religion and the home of the Mohammedan



THE GREAT MOSQUE AT DELHI, INDIA

power, with India as a remote background. But in our day there is a vaster Orient. The Mohammedan lands, including Persia, are only its western frontier; India is its southern centre; while more important than them all are China and Japan in the Far East. Even the term "Far East" becomes a misnomer since the Pacific is the highway of nations and Japan the nearest neighbor to our Californian ports.

We have excluded from this sketch all central and northern Asia, a region of great historic significance and not without enduring influence. But its mere mention here is all that we can give to it, nor is it possible to include the lesser states of southeastern Asia in our survey. And further, we must cut off the older Orient, the true East of the Arabian Nights and the Crusades. We come, therefore, to the two remaining portions, India and the Far East. Again we are tempted to divide, for how shall we group these together?

After careful consideration we decide to include them both, so that the "East" in this book shall mean India, China and Japan, a distinction arbitrary in its inclusions and in its exclusions, and of use only in a practical and not a scientific way.

Let us look over the geography of our field. Asia contains one third of the land surface of the globe, and may be divided along the fortieth degree of latitude. North of it are the great stretches of plains, deserts and low plateaux, to the Arctic Ocean, the rivers running north; while south of it, with some intervening space, are the empires where the people dwell with whom we are to deal. Even in this half, kingdoms must be ignored while we confine ourselves to India, China and Japan. Confine ourselves, did we inadvertently write? How could we write adequately of any of the three in twice our space? But one may comfort himself with the reflec-

tion that he has to do only with the "spirit" of the East, and that he may ignore most of its outward form and be freed from statistics and geography and politics, save as they immediately affect the soul, and from a multitude of details however interesting. The Spirit too can spread over the Himalaya ranges, and cross the seas between China and Japan in a fashion impossible to plodding scientific research or to the most rapid globe-trotter.

The dictionary tells us that "spirit" means "a peculiar animating and inspiring principle; genius; that which pervades and tempers the conduct and thought of men, either singly or (especially) in bodies, and characterizes them and their works." So we have the "spirit of the place" or the "spirit of the age." Evidently then there must be a certain unity in diversity, and the unity must be something which is essential if we are to speak of the

"spirit" of the East. In what sense can we use the term? What unity pervading and tempering the conduct and thoughts of men can we find? Perhaps we shall be helped if we ask ourselves what we might mean by the "spirit of the Occident." Let us strictly limit the West also, and including in it only the nations which have been closely associated — Italy, France, Germany, England, the United States — possibly we can find some "genius" which will characterize them all.

It is manifestly out of the question to find a "spirit" which shall be alike in all the innumerable multitude which constitute these populations. We know many Americans whom we should not wish regarded as embodying the American spirit. When we speak of a representative American we think of some man who stands out preëminent — a Washington, a Franklin, a Lincoln, an Emerson, a Longfellow — and say he is represent-

ative and embodies the American spirit. It is related that once a group of English men of letters discussed whom they would choose from all history to represent England were some new planet to open communication with our old earth, and that they decided upon Milton, immortal poet, scholar, statesman, gentleman, Christian. In some such fashion we pick out our representative who embodies the American spirit, that is, who incarnates our ideal, and set him forth as the kind of man we would have foreigners and strangers judge us by.

It is perhaps impossible to pick out in this fashion the representative Occidental,—the differences are too great,—and therefore we must attack our problem in more indirect fashion. With all our diversity there is a certain unity in the West, of religion, of social organization, of political forms, of history, of art and literature and music and architecture, of education

and language and blood. With this too is the constant intermingling of our people and our perpetual intercourse in friendship or in rivalry. First we put religion, for this is the most powerful in its influence. When we say God, or heaven, or salvation, or sin, or church, our thoughts are more or less alike, and our diversities are not of race but of individuals, so that we may translate these terms at once into all the languages of the West without danger of being misunderstood. Behind us is the same great background of religious truth; Israel with its prophets and apostles, the creeds of the early church, the organization of the mediaeval church, the struggles of the Reformation, all belong to all and produce a true unity in this realm of ultimate reality.

So too are we one in our classical heritage; our literature is built upon the foundation of the Greeks, and the great writers of any of the peoples—

Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe — are naturalized in all. Political systems differ, yet the Roman law is the common heritage. The peoples have the same aspirations after liberty, and the political, social and industrial organizations are on similar lines, all moving along the same path and with the same end in view. Our art and architecture have the same classic background, the like Gothic and Renaissance features with the same modern adaptions, for our students study in the same schools and use the same models, and gain in a kindred atmosphere the same inspiration. Science too overleaps boundaries and unites its votaries in the great Republic of Truth, so that our universities are cosmopolitan in the true sense, and nationality is regarded neither in student nor professor. Add to all this the intimate intercourse, the crowds which cross the ocean east and west, and the mingling of blood through in-

termarriages, so that no race is pure or without its tinctures of all the others, and we may well think that the differences are less than the agreements, and that Americans, Englishmen, Germans, Frenchmen and Italians are one, joint heirs to a common heritage, united in a vigorous present, and in the hope of a still more glorious future. Surely one might set forth with ease what is the "genius" which constitutes the "spirit" of the West.

But with the East how great the difference! What has India in common with China, or either with Japan? There is no common history nor law nor social organization nor religion,—with Buddhism the only exception,—so that no interracial consciousness is realized. To the vast majority of these populations the thought of oneness has never occurred, for Asia has never been one in war or peace. Only in our day by the reflex influence of Europe are Orientals coming to recog-

nize a certain solidarity. How then can we speak of a "spirit of Asia" at all as distinguished from the "spirit" of Africa or of Europe?

The question suggests its answer. Asia is not like Europe, nor like Africa. There is at least a certain unity of contrast. None takes the one for the other. It is said that Asiatics understand each other at once in a fashion that is impossible to Europeans and Asiatics. All Europeans are "foreigners" from Constantinople to the Pacific, but all Asiatics are in a sense at home in whatever part of this broad domain they wander, as we are at home even in the remoter parts of Europe. We know too in a general way what we mean when we speak of Asiatic customs, government, art and things in general, and we never misplace the adjectives European, African, Asiatic. Without attempting yet more precise definition, possibly we may put Africa for barbarism, Asia

for stagnant civilization, Europe for progress. Such definitions are not of much value, but they make a starting place. Africa produces no great civilization, as it was in the beginning so it remains, and all its glories are from without, its spots and periods of civilization due to the presence of foreign peoples, with some periods of the Egyptian kingdom as a doubtful exception. But India, China and Japan were civilized empires when our fathers were barbarians. They have produced all the elements of civilization, highly developed religious and ethical teachings, complex systems of laws, refined philosophies, magnificent architecture and art and literature. Long, long ago they reached the stage our ancestors slowly and laboriously attained millenniums after in part through the aid of the ancient civilization of the East. But the East has stood still so long that it has come to identify its civilization with the laws

of nature and to think it as immovable and as unimprovable. Man with all his work becomes a part of nature, and like it he is subject to Fate.

We have thus a common feature, the immemorial character of Eastern civilization, its early maturity and its comparative immobility. In this we must not include Japan, as in many other respects also it is in a category by itself; but the beginnings of the other two peoples are wholly lost in antiquity. How long ago were China and India already civilized? Frankly we do not know. Perhaps we are on historic ground when we go back to the tenth or twelfth century before Christ. At that early date the gaze of some immortal visitant to earth would have been attracted to Babylonia and to Egypt, to India and to China. Africa, save Egypt, then as now would have been in darkness, Europe would have been without form and void excepting possibly some stirrings where the glory

of Greece was to be, but already China on a smaller scale would have shown the same features as to-day, and India would have revealed in germ what remains in old age. Were our visitor to return in this twentieth century A.D., after three thousand years, he would feel at home in China and in India; Africa would be repulsive as before, Europe transformed and America discovered.

We understand why our South European ancestors of the time of the Christian era did not feel the difference between East and West as we feel it, for there was no such difference. Substantially all then stood on a level. But while the East has remained content, the West has moved on. So far we are perhaps on solid ground, but antiquity and stagnation do not mean very much. Can we find other indications of unity in India and China, characteristics comparable to those enumerated as constituting European oneness?

The noteworthy fact, first of all, as in Europe so in Asia, is religion. If we are to find a genuine oneness in the contents of consciousness it will be here. For Buddhism has been largely predominant in the three empires alike. The Indian religion was made the state religion of China in the first century of the Christian era, and it became the state religion of Japan six centuries later. This has profound significance. Notwithstanding all our efforts, no great Asiatic people has accepted Christianity. They seem inaccessible to its powers as nations. But the greatest Asiatic nations yielded readily to Buddhism without the need of organized missionary societies or a vast propagandism. With it went the art, the philosophy and many of the social customs of India. India became a far-away, dim, holy land to the peoples north and east, so that a certain historic and continental consciousness was created. No other positive insti-

tution is comparable to this as a bond of union.

Yet after all it is not comparable to the unity effected by Christianity in the West. There was nothing like the Crusades which gave Europe first its full sense of oneness, nor like the all-embracing organization of the Church of Rome. Shortly after Buddhism won China it lost importance in India, and finally entirely died out of the land of its birth. Nor even in the height of its power was there more than the merest fraction of the amount of intercourse which made for centuries the Catholic Church the most homogeneous and powerful organization on earth. Buddhism, moreover, after a while decayed in China, and later still in Japan. In these empires educated men renounced it, and it became the religion of the ignorant and the superstitious, ceasing to influence further development.

But there is a unity deeper than this afforded by Buddhism, something which

SETH'S TEMPLE, BRINDABAN, INDIA

underlies Buddhism itself, and which separates profoundly East from West. I have said above that one may translate religious terms unhesitatingly into all the languages of Europe. But we cannot so translate Christian terms into Asiatic tongues. The missionaries after generations of debate cannot agree as to the proper word for God in Chinese. This indicates a fundamental difference in the way of looking at the universe, and abstract as it may seem, a few words must be given to this subject or we shall not make a beginning in our effort to understand the spirit of the East.

Europeans think of this universe as created by God out of nothing some six thousand years ago. Man is God's child, made in God's image, with an immortal soul and a destiny of pain or suffering according to his deeds and faith. Thus immense emphasis is put on the personality of God and man, while the world has been of secondary impor-

tance. So it has been in the thoughts of Christendom for a thousand years, and other ideas are slowly displacing some of these only now in our own day, and however our thoughts of the world change, our estimate of the supreme value of personality remains. But to the Asiatic all is different. The universe with its fixed laws and its resistless fate is the ultimate fact. It exists from everlasting to everlasting. It goes on and on in ever-repeating cycles. It comes from chaos, assumes definite form, continues for a while, returns to chaos, and repeats the round worlds without end. Man is a part of this process, as are the gods themselves, the whole an organism with men and gods as incidents in its mighty movement.

Possibly the vastness of Asia, which overpowers man, has produced this result. In India the climate conquers, and none can resist it. The individual comes to a quick maturity, passes into an indolent middle life, and sinks with-

out regret into old age. Englishmen avoid this only by short terms of service, by frequent vacations in more stimulating atmospheres, and by sending their children home to England at an early age. Nature is at once too prolific and too terrible; too prolific it yields enough for man without calling for strenuous endeavor; too terrible it teaches him that his utmost labor is impotent before its vast calamities. China, it is true, has not thus conquered man; its climate does not enervate, nor its mountains appall, yet its long isolation, the vastness of its domain and the immensity of its population have produced something of the same effect. To go through the common round, to accomplish the daily task, to live as the parents lived, is all that one can fairly ask. And beyond this there is no aspiration, and while individuals are ambitious of achieving success, for the race there comes no vision of a better time to come. Such

a want of progress is not surprising, for it is man's normal state. Here with ourselves it is only the few who contribute to the advance of civilization. The majority are content. Let this contentment, which is akin to despair, take possession of a race and fatalism is the certain result. It is only where men think of God as Father that it can be escaped, or where they believe they have discovered a scientific method which will enable them to control nature.

With such conceptions of nature and man it is not surprising that history in its true sense does not exist. The Hindus are notoriously deficient in historic interest. In China there are records enough, and of two kinds,—mere annals of the past, dry and without human interest; or ethical, the past made to enforce by its events the teachings of the Sages. Real history has to do with progress, with the successive embodiment of high ideals in society.

That makes the interest of the European story. In Asia there have been endless wars, but these have been mere struggles of king against king, or of race against race, resulting in no constitutional development and leaving the people unchanged whoever won. Hence it is impossible to get interested in the story, as it is intolerably tedious, without real movement or result.

The internal story has been like the external. Great empires, like the Mughal, have arisen, magnificent, potent, luxurious, sometimes liberal and intellectual. But the same result has always followed, and soon the splendor of the capital has caused intolerable misery among the people. Or, as in China, conquest has introduced merely a new set of rulers, who in turn have been transformed into the likeness of the people they have conquered.

This want of development has been the result doubtless of the same causes

which have produced the religious views already described. The people have been content with tyranny as a part of the inevitable nature of things, content even with misery, since no way of escape appeared. Everything is, nothing becomes. All has been fixed. That rich should be rich, and that poor should be poor, that kings should rule and subjects obey, that the great events of life and death should be beyond control, and the small events of life, our calling, our etiquette, our clothes, our food, should be settled beyond dispute,—all this and more is a part of the unending round which is to-day as it was in the days of our fathers, and so it shall be to the remotest generation of those who come after us. Hence all go on without challenge or remonstrance, and it is only when there is some intolerable burden newly imposed by political tyranny that there is an uprising, and this is not in the interest of a new or-

der of society, but in an attempted easement of the old.

Science represents the same spirit. There have been endless speculation and study, but they have expended themselves upon words and airy nothings. So science has never been for the understanding of the physical world that man may master it. Metaphysics instead of physics sums up the situation. Thought has been so refined that ordinary men could not grasp it, and the masses have been left to ignorance as to servitude. With religion, too, the same result has obtained. In its higher conceptions it has been the exclusive possession of the few, and its end has been escape from the round of the weary world, but both method and end have been too refined for the multitude, who are left to superstition and debasing idolatry.

Thus do we of the West judge the spirit of the East. It knows no pro-

gress, for its God is Fate. To some Fate gives power and wealth and long life and happiness, to some it gives toil and sorrow and superstition. Let each stand in his own place, knowing that struggle but increases sorrow. Science is transcendental metaphysics, religion is withdrawal from the world, government is by the strongest and in the interest of the governors.

Our description is true, we are convinced, and yet unjust. It is not the whole truth, for it produces a sense of sadness and depression which is unfair and too all-embracing. Let us remember that the great drama of life is the same with East and West alike, and that the joys which make up so large a part of our lives are theirs also. There as here, the common talk, the common aspiration, the common grief and the common happiness are much the same. Could one be gifted with the gift of tongues and with an invisible and all-pervading

presence, he would be astonished to notice how exactly alike is nine tenths of the talk in all the regions of the earth,—weather, and crops, and money, and trade, and sickness, and birth, and death, and marriage, and food, and gossip, furnish its substance in India, in China and in Japan, as in Europe and America.

The Spirit of the East has brought forth many noble sons of exalted lives,—statesmen, and poets, and warriors, and law-givers, and holy men. In this, too, the West has no monopoly. In these great representatives we must look for the embodiment of the spirit. In Asia the characteristic is retiracy from the world, a certain aloofness of soul, an indifference to outward state and fortune, and a conviction that salvation is in the mind only. There is an exaltation above the heat and struggle of the world which charms many Occidentals, all of us, perhaps, in certain moods. Many men

from the West enter into this spirit and come to prefer the retiracy and meditation and calm of the East to the bustle and toil and noise of our modern progress, for the real difference between East and West is not of longitude but of habit and cast of mind.

But our admiration and condemnation are of little moment. The East is too great a factor in the world to care for our judgment. It does not ask the consent of the West that it may exist, for the West is no nearer God than is itself, nor have we any peculiar title to the earth. So our task is not to criticise, but to attempt to understand these far-away peoples, our brothers of a common humanity.

II
The Asiatic Point of View

II

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HE traveller wearies of the East, with its discomforts, its squalor, its beggars and its pride. There is little to see, he thinks, after the first picturesqueness has worn off, and much to endure. Excepting again Japan, where in all Asia shall one be made fairly comfortable? It is only where the Occidental has gone that there is a measure of decent accommodation. The roads are not worthy of the name, the inns are abodes of misery, the means of transportation are primitive. Everything is disorganized, behind time and listless, so that the whole continent appears discouraged and systemless. The governments are at once inefficient and burdensome, and the people either arrogant or servile. They lie and cheat, and are generally contemptible and untrustworthy. Nothing

is done at the right time nor in the right way. This at least is our impression after reading wearisomely book after book written on India and China, after conversing with residents, and visiting the lands and observing their effect upon travellers. Said Lord Elgin of the Chinese diplomatists, "They yield nothing to reason and everything to force," and another distinguished representative of Great Britain declared the East a sad training-school for diplomatists, since there are only two classes, bullies and bullied. These utterances express the common notion, and it is as prevalent among merchants as among officials. The ordinary mortal comes to feel that he is surrounded with trickery, and that he can best get his way by force. So as the great diplomatists bully governments with fleets and armies, private citizens bully individuals with oaths and fists. I once heard an English planter from Ceylon complain of his

government there, "It is ruining the natives, for things have got to such a pass that one may be hauled before a magistrate merely for knocking down his servant!" How many natives have been knocked down, and yet have fawned upon their assailant? Who can forget the thrill of horror with which he first saw (in Cairo it was for me) officials using whips on the backs of their fellow countrymen?

No wonder that travellers find a few weeks enough for India or China, travellers we mean as distinct from scholars who will find a lifetime all too short for either. The globe-trotter wearies of tombs and temples, and comes to think "Oriental magnificence" mythical. He finds its remains, indeed, at Agra and Delhi, and profusion, display and extravagance in the capitals of the native princes. But with it all there is a lack of finish and of attention to detail, so that the effect is not pleasing. So it is in Peking; the palace,

opened at last to foreign eyes, contained, like all Oriental palaces, many articles of beauty, but in such confusion and with so much of disorder and of positive filth that the total effect was repulsive. Gradually it becomes apparent that the East is not the home of splendor nor of wealth. Either the ancient tradition was the exaggeration of travellers' tales, or more likely it was the effect of our comparative barbarism. So our good American concludes that his pretty little town in the United States is "good enough for him," and that we have more things worth seeing than have all the multitudes of mankind in the storied Orient. Who that has walked the streets of Jerusalem, or stopped in a Chinese inn, or observed the plague-stricken condition of some village community of India, can fail to sympathize with him? And if one find here and there an exception, the home of some rich merchant in China, a garden of tran-

scendent beauty in India, some Oriental mansion with blank wall to the street but luxury within in the Mohammedan domains, he wonders the more that a people who can develop here and there an oasis will permit the wilderness elsewhere to prevail.

Our straightforward American, accustomed to streets crossing at right angles, lined with trees, with pretty houses equipped with every comfort, longs to bring some of the "natives" to the United States for an object lesson that will revolutionize their modes of thought and life. He overlooks the fact that there are object lessons closer at hand, in the foreign settlements in Bombay and Hongkong and Shanghai, and yet that the native life goes on as before. The average Oriental seems impervious to attacks whether as traveller in the West or as an observer of foreign ways at home. Even after years amid all our modern improvements he goes

home unchanged, to cast his new habits at once, and to return to the easy-going customs of the past. The new does not appear worth its cost to him.

An Asiatic who had lived in diplomatic circles in Paris declared that the game was not worth the candle,—the endless engagements, the notes which must be answered, the formal parties and dinners and public functions. His own ideal was a garden and a mansion where one could do as he pleased, where one visited his friends at his own desire, and entertained or not as the whim seized him, where there was no mail, and no newspapers, and no need for a calendar or a notebook. Our civilization was so filled with machinery that it destroyed repose and charm and the true taste of life. We hasten and have so much to do; why not enjoy now what we have? Time hastens away; why use it all in preparing to live? Besides, after all, what

are these reforms? Take the world as it comes, you cannot change it.

In some such fashion the Oriental returns our criticism. Yet all summaries are unjust, for there is no such thing as "Oriental opinion." We have possibly an average American opinion as to the East, but we have many Americans who think this average judgment "Philistine" and prefer Eastern ways of life and thought. So in the East there are men who frankly admire the West and would reform the East upon its model. But the larger part as with us are indifferent, not taking the trouble to form an opinion, and the larger part of the thinking minority are frankly hostile. Between the two extremes are all degrees of admiration and antipathy. Besides, the ordinary Oriental is not given to free expression of his sentiments, and he is as untrained in observation as he is unwilling in expression. Hence many of the judgments of East and West most often quoted

from Orientals are from men who have been trained in Europe and America, and who in their criticism reflect their adopted point of view. If we attempt, then, to learn what the East really thinks of us we shall be cautious, and rest content with setting forth simply what some Orientals say of us.

First let us hear the language of thoroughgoing detestation. For such expressions we must go to men of position and of education. The common people for the greater part neither understand nor care about these things. My first quotation is from Japan. Its writer was a good representative of the old régime, scholar, soldier, gentleman, patriot. He had the sincerity of the martyr, and he perished because of his impassioned opposition to the course of the government in opening Japan to foreign intercourse. He died in 1862, and the little book from which I quote was printed in December, 1857. It is a tirade against Western science,

and its contention is that our learning is superficial, while the Chinese is profound and of the heart:

"Followers of the Western learning shamelessly say that the West knows the laws of the universe. They are rebels who exhibit a forged seal of state and gather a vile rabble. True disciples of Confucius and Mencius should raise their banner, expose the counterfeit and destroy these false scholars. The learning of the West knows only the outward, and deals with the seen, it cannot understand fundamental principles. Foreigners are minute in researches, and careful in measurements, but they do not understand that the true 'Way' of the universe is benevolence, righteousness, loyalty and truth. Hence their learning cannot make them virtuous. Their astronomy is wonderful in its measurements, but it destroys reverence for Heaven, and makes them think it a dead material thing. They do not

know that Heaven and man are one, and that the essential nature of both is righteousness. They are like children who should measure carefully the features of their father's body, and care nothing for his heart. Besides, all that is essential is in our own ancient books which contain the root of the matter. Why neglect it and go to the foreigners for the leaves and branches? The foreigners do not know these books, and are like the brutes in consequence, and alas! our own scholars, misled by appearances, forsake the truth and go astray. Heaven is high, exalted, beyond our little efforts to extol or belittle it, beyond our praise or blame. Would we benefit it, we cannot; would we kill it, it is beyond our reach. Only as its 'Way' is followed and its laws observed can it be served. Let each one die for duty, there is naught else that one can do."

This sincere patriot and philosopher thus rejects Western learning because

of its unworthiness. It may, indeed, he thinks, help out the affairs of man's outward life, but it does not minister to the moral and the spiritual. We can readily understand his position as we remember how in the West the advances of physical science have been resisted in the supposed interests of religion. As our leaders have talked of "science falsely so called" under the impression that it opposed the revelation of God, so it is in the East. It has been the most sincere and believing men who have been chief in the opposition. Dr. Arthur Smith expresses the same opinion in writing of the Chinese literati: "To suppose that anything could be added to their wisdom is as arrogant an assumption to the Orthodox Confucianist as it would be to a Christian for one to claim that an appendix to the New Testament is to be looked for which shall be of equal value and authority with its twenty-seven books." Such is the convinced judg-

ment too of the Mohammedan world as to the Koran and of the Hindus as to their sacred books. Thus, to the trained and educated "natives" of these lands our learning is of trifling import compared with the deeper wisdom of their sages and saints.

This notion that our superiority is physical and material while theirs is moral and spiritual is widespread and deep-rooted. A distinguished representative of American Christianity on a visit to India repelled the natives by insisting upon the advanced position, the power and wealth of the Christian nations. "Granting all you claim," they replied, "what has it to do with religion?" This idea was expressed at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago by the Chinese secretary of the Chinese legation in Washington:

"What Christ means by calling attention to the lilies of the field has a parallel in the Confucian doctrine of doing one's daily duties and awaiting

the call of fate. The object of all this is to teach men to put down the desires of the flesh, and to preserve the moral sense which is inherent in human nature in a state of activity. The meaning of the above-cited passage is clear enough from the Chinese as well as the English version of the Bible. Missionaries in China, however, often contend in their controversial writings that the Christian nations of the West owe their material well-being and political ascendency to their religion. It is difficult to see upon what this argument is based. When teachers of religion speak of material prosperity and political ascendency in such commendable terms, they in fact turn away from teaching religion to propagating such theories of government as were advocated by Kwan-tz, Shang-tz and Tao Chukung. It is the end of every government, indeed, to strive after material prosperity and political ascendency. Christ, however, proposes

an entirely different end, which is, to seek the Kingdom of Heaven. He certainly did not hold up the foreign masters that were exercising supreme political control over his own country at the time as an example worthy of imitation."*

Nor are such expressions from the literati only, for our author goes on to say:

"Missionaries take great pleasure in teaching others in the name of Christ that after death they may hope to go to Heaven, but the people of the East have a notion that after death the soul descends into Hades. When I was attached to the Board of Punishment at Lang Chang, I often had opportunity to examine the papers relating to cases of riot against missionaries which had been sent up to the board by the provincial authorities. I frequently came across expressions like 'I prefer to go

* "World's Parliament of Religions," which is authority also for quotations in the next four pages.

to Hades; let him go to Heaven,' used by the defendants in their depositions. It is easy to infer the intense bitterness of their hatred from this. Those men were evidently under the opinion that they were writing their hostile feelings against Christ, though they knew not who Christ was.

"Yet it is not entirely unreasonable that the terrified suspicion, or you may say superstition, that Christianity is the instrument of depredation, is avowedly or unavowedly aroused in the Oriental mind when it is an admitted fact that some of the most powerful nations of Christendom are gradually encroaching upon the Orient."

Alas! It is "not entirely unreasonable," since the history of international discourse has been a history of aggression, and since the people of the East have come to believe that commercial exploitation and conquest are the chief end of Western governments.

In India also we find the claim to a higher wisdom and a more truly ethical life, nor is there any reason to doubt its sincerity. This is the way even our religious activity appears to the higher minds in the land which is so wearisome to our ordinary traveller:

"My friend, I am often afraid, I confess, when I contemplate the condition of European and American society, where your activities are so manifold, your work so extensive, that you are drowned in it, and you have little time to consider the great question of regeneration, of personal sanctification, of trial and judgment, and of acceptance before God. That is the question of all questions. A right theological basis may lead to social reform, but a right line of public activity and the doing of good is bound to lead to the salvation of the doer's soul and the regeneration of public men."

"Thus by insight into the immanence of God's spirit in nature, thus by intro-

spection into the fullness of the divine presence in the heart, thus by rapturous and loving worship, and thus by renunciation and self-surrender, Asia has learned and taught wisdom, practised and preached contemplation, laid down rules of worship, and glorified the righteousness of God.

"In the West you observe, watch and act. In the East we contemplate, commune, and suffer ourselves to be carried away by the spirit of the universe. In the West you wrest from nature her secrets, you conquer her, she makes you wealthy and prosperous, you look upon her as your slave, and sometimes fail to recognize her sacredness. In the East nature is our eternal sanctuary, the soul is our everlasting temple, and the sacredness of God's creation is only next to the sacredness of God himself. In the West you love equality, you respect man, you seek justice. In the East love is the fulfillment of the law, we

have hero worship, we behold God in humanity. In the West you establish the moral law, you insist upon propriety of conduct, you are governed by public opinion. In the East we aspire, perhaps vainly aspire, after absolute self-conquest, and the holiness which makes God its model. In the West you work incessantly, and your work is your worship. In the East we meditate and worship for long hours, and worship is our work. Perhaps one day, after this parliament has achieved its success, the Western and Eastern men will combine to support each other's strength and supply each other's deficiencies. And then that blessed synthesis of human nature shall be established which all prophets have foretold, and all the devout souls have sighed for."

Thus is set over against our claim to a higher civilization as strong a pretension to a deeper spirituality and to profounder thought. In these pas-

sages just quoted India's ideal comes to full expression, and not only India's but Asia's, for listen to a native of Japan who writes English equal to that of our Hindu friend:

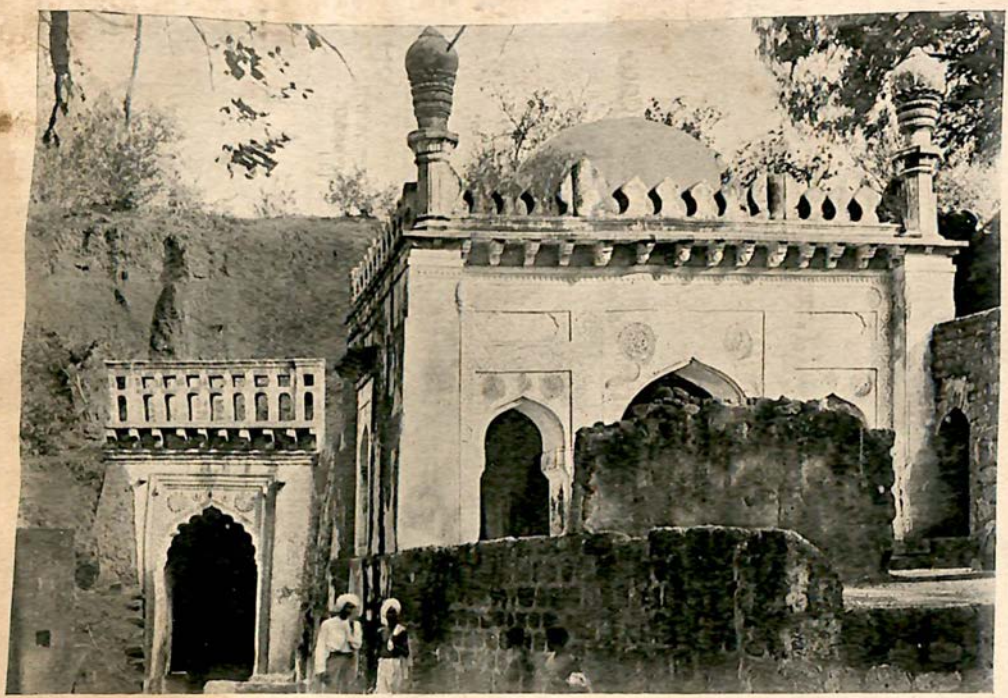
"Asia is one. The Himalayas divide only to accentuate two mighty civilizations, the Chinese with its communism of Confucius, and the Indian with its individualism of the Vedas. But not even the snowy barriers can interrupt for one moment that broad expanse of love for the Ultimate and Universal, which is the common thought-inheritance of every Asiatic race, enabling them to produce all the great religions of the world, and distinguishing them from those maritime peoples of the Mediterranean and the Baltic, who love to dwell on the particular, and to search out the means, not the end of life."*

This then is the contrast: the West seeks convenience, contrivance, com-

* "The Ideals of the East," Kakuzo Okakura, p. 1.

fort, the victory over matter; the East seeks after the Absolute, God, and its victory is of the Spirit. Man, as we have already said, seems overpowered by nature in the East, but he attempts to conquer it in the West. It is at least something gained if we recognize that current opinion represents more or less accurately the two spirits. It is true that the ordinary American criticises the Orient for its lack of material progress, and that the Oriental criticises us for our absorption in these things. We shall not attempt to estimate the correctness of the criticism, nor to judge between the two estimates, for our present task is merely to understand.

But surely, our American interposes, there can be no dispute as to the advantages of cleanliness over filth, of attractive villages over slums, and in general of modern methods over ancient ways. So it seems to us, but the East will not readily acknowledge it.



MOHAMMEDAN MOSQUE, NEAR BIDAR, DECCAN, INDIA

The way their fathers trod is their way. Would you have them wiser or better than their revered forefathers? So tradition and custom form a barrier which is almost impenetrable. Take sanitation, for instance; one would think the visitation of the plague would cause all to flee to modern science for safety; but no! the natives of Bombay resisted so stoutly the efforts of the authorities that efforts at control were given up and the terrible scourge is left unchecked, claiming in one year more than a million victims.

A missionary, impressed with the inefficient methods of agriculture, unimproved since the days of Alexander the Great, tilled a plot of ground in the American fashion, with results far beyond all Indian precedent. But none followed his example, not even though he imported ploughs and offered them for sale at less than the price of native ones. The people could not see that

which was before their eyes, and ascribed his success not to his instruments but to some occult virtue in him as a foreigner. The weight of the past is too heavy, and the bondage of custom too strong for emancipation to win, and the "native" remains unconvinced and unimpressed. It is natural to him that some should succeed and others fail, and his own lot is to submit and suffer.

These are the peasants, and in India. Perhaps they do not represent the spirit of Asia. Take another example. A distinguished Chinese nobleman represented his country for years at the court of St. James, and finally he wrote his impressions for an English review. He was not insensible to the position of Western states nor to the advantages of Western civilization. But after all what should one do? The conditions in China are so finely balanced, the population is so closely proportioned to the means of liveli-

hood, the occupations by which one may gain a livelihood are so preëmpted that any disturbance in economic relations causes death to thousands. To build a railway means that thousands of carriers shall starve, and to introduce machinery is to deprive multitudes of all chance for gaining a livelihood. Possibly, in the end, the country will gain a benefit, but who shall venture to decree the misery involved on the chance of helping some future generation? Besides, we are in the hands of Fate; centuries ago China was as much ahead of Europe as the latter now is ahead of Asia. Possibly the wheel of fate may turn again and the future see once more the lots reversed, and if not, what can man do against the resistless currents of the universe?

There is doubtless another side. Some Asiatics know that the West is not wholly immoral and greedy. Some, too, are ready to agree that its

intercourse with Asia has taught lessons which Asia may well learn, and conferred benefits which should excite gratitude. Let us hear this other side. Once on a steamer going from Colombo to Bombay I met two Kulim Brahmans, that is, men of the highest caste India knows. They were graduates of the University, spoke English well, and knowing that I was an American, spoke their minds freely. This was the substance of their opinion as to their English rulers:

Individual Englishmen we dislike. They are proud and insulting often. But we acknowledge the benefits of English rule. It gives us peace. Were it withdrawn we should fly at once at each other's throats and end by becoming the prey of Russia. Then, too, England gives us justice. In the past India never knew it, but now the foreign judge is incorruptible, and so far as in him lies does equal justice to every man. This of itself compensates

for all the annoyances of British rule.

This is not a solitary judgment, but is held by many intelligent men. It is well expressed by a native writer in the columns of the "Indian Nation," a paper ably conducted and most appropriately designated:

"An enlightened administration of justice, especially in criminal cases, religious toleration, liberty of the press, liberty of holding meetings and petitioning—these are the rights which we in this country have so easily acquired that we are in danger of undervaluing them. We have secured by a few strokes of the pen of beneficent legislators advantages which Englishmen have had in their own country to buy with their blood." *

"It is a practical commentary on the truth and justice of the charge brought against natives that they bitterly hate the dominant race as a rule, that individual attachment to individual Eng-

* "New India," by Sir H. J. S. Cotton.

lishmen should be so marked a trait in native character. It is hardly possible to travel over any part of India, where some individual Englishman has not left the impress of his hand, whether for good or evil, on the locality and its people. And it reflects the highest credit and honor on the native races that while the names of the bad and oppressive men have been almost forgotten, the memory of the good, just or charitable Englishmen has been preserved by tradition in perfect freshness—a perpetual testimony to the simplicity, forgiving spirit and gratitude of the Indian character. The native heart is naturally kind, but the kindness becomes warmer when the object of it is a member of the dominant class. It is not always because we expect any return from him, but it is a peculiar feeling with us to be anxious to stand well with a race to whom we owe so many obligations as a fallen and subject people. If those

obligations had been unmixed with quite as great wrongs, it is our fear that Englishmen might have been objects of our idolatry, so enthusiastic is our regard and affection for all who really mean to confer or have conferred on us any great benefits."*

But higher testimony still is at hand. The Eastern search for the "Ultimate and the Absolute" had run its course. Ancient religion had sunk into debasing superstition without possibility of revival from within. Then came the powerful nations of the West, and with them new life for the East:

"Our Anglo-Saxon rulers brought with them their high civilization, their improved methods of education and their general enlightenment. We had been in darkness and had well-nigh forgotten our bright and glorious past. But a new era dawned upon us. New thoughts, new ideas, new notions began to flash upon us one after an-

* "New India," by Sir H. J. S. Cotton.

other. We were rudely aroused form our long sleep of ignorance and self-forgetfulness. The old and the new met face to face. We felt that the old could not stand in the presence of the new. The old began to see in the light of the new and we soon learned to feel that our country and society had been for a long time suffering from a number of social evils, from the errors of ignorance and from the evils of superstition. Thus we began to bestir ourselves in the way of social organization. Such, then, were the occasion and the origin of the work of social reforms in India."*

That quotation represents a state of mind seldom found perhaps in India, not often met in China, but characteristic of Japan. We have left this empire for the most part out of our review. Many Asiatics regard it as a traitor to the East and as the willing ally of the West. But it at least makes

* "Parliament of Religions."

a choice. We should, however, misunderstand its attitude were we to think it the undiscriminating copyist of our ways. It believes that West and East have each their part to give to the greater humanity of the future, and that Japan, understanding both, is to unite them, making the future better than the present and far nobler than the past. That this is Japan's high mission is the faith of her noblest sons.

Whether it be so or not, we cannot turn away unmoved from the vision. If God rules we cannot join in the wholesale condemnation of the East as if it were a blot on His creation. Its long story must have a meaning, and it doubtless has its own message for us. Neither can we agree to its condemnation of the West. We have faults enough; we are materialistic, greedy, proud, but we are not wholly of the earth earthy. Here, too, are spirituality and pure morality and

profound thought. We have our lessons for the East, and as we come to understand each other we shall both learn, and from our intercourse may we not believe that the old antipathies will pass away and that, though East remain East and West remain West, still there shall be triumphant over both the nobler spirit of our common humanity, a spirit which holds all men as brothers as all have one Father, God?

III

India, its People and Customs

III

India, its People and Customs

UR attempt to describe the spirit of the East is confessedly inadequate, for who can pretend to embody that which is so illusive? Now we are to study the three great countries in turn with the purpose of testing our statements a little more in detail. Naturally India comes first, naturally because of its immemorial relationship to ourselves and because of its relationship to the lands farther east. We could not reverse the order. India has been known to the West from the dawn of history, and it has contributed much to our civilization. Some of its people, too, are distant relatives of our own. And it has also made an impression on China, and through China on Japan. Thus it is truly a world centre, sending influences throughout the East and the West, so that it has

reached all parts of the globe. It is a continent in itself, 1,900 miles from north to south, and 1,900 miles from east to west, with a population of more than 290,000,000 souls. This vast area is divided, excluding Burmah and Ceylon, into three great divisions: First, the great mountain region in the north, the dwelling-place of the snows, Himalaya. One climbs laboriously the foothills, themselves mountain chains with beautiful valleys and wide fertile regions, until he reaches a ridge whence he looks down into an intervening valley, with the wall on the other side which divides Asia, a wall averaging twenty thousand feet in height, with the loftiest peaks in the world, and with valleys into which the Alps might be dropped and hidden. There are hundreds of miles so high that their summits have never been trodden by the foot of man or beast. It seems impossible that the region should be a part of our common world, so dazzling is

it and so lofty, like a white veil let down from heaven and resting lightly upon the earth. These mountains constitute a great system with parallel ranges and spurs jutting out to the southeast and southwest. From the earliest times they have formed a barrier, impassable in its greater extent to men excepting at its ends, where the hills break down, or through infrequent and difficult passes. Second, the great river plains, Middle India stretching along the courses of the Indus, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra. Here have been the seats of the great empires and the home of the densest populations. South of the plain comes the southern hill country, the Deccan, its northern boundary the Vindhya range. This plateau is bounded by the Vindhyas on the north and the ocean on the east, south and west, with the two coast ranges called the Ghats, which meet in the south at Cape Comorin. This region was the last to be

civilized, and has still in our day many wild tribes among its inhabitants.

In remote antiquity Mongolian peoples, Mongoloid the scientists call them, came into India from the northeast. They occupied the slopes of the Himalaya Mountains, and followed the course of the Brahmaputra a little way into Bengal. They mingled with the peoples who had preceded them, and fared variously, some advancing in civilization and some deteriorating. There their descendants still remain, the languages showing traces of an ancient connection with the Chinese. But the great road, the great series of roads, into the land was from the northwest. Thence came a succession of peoples and of races. In historic times Alexander the Great thus entered India, and the British Empire watches the passes with jealous care, knowing that from thence must come the Russians if their dreams of Indian conquest are to be realized.

TANK AND NORTHERN GOPURAM, CHIDAMBARAM, INDIA

But long before Alexander, long before there were any Englishmen, perhaps thirty-five hundred years ago—a few centuries do not matter, we shall try to be exact within say five hundred years—the people came who were to form the India we know, the Aryans, tall, well-formed, light-colored, with a noble language and a great religion. They dwelt long in the valleys and on the slopes of the mountains, and then slowly, in the course of centuries, occupied the river plains. They went far to the south also along the western coast, but in the centre and the east they were halted permanently by the Vindhya range.

How they came to win the land we do not know. There are traces of the process in their sacred books. It was doubtless partly by conquest. They despised and subjugated the "natives," hating their black color, their short bodies, their pug noses and their half-savage ways. In the sacred books

these humble folks appear as savages and demons. But traces remain which show that the aborigines were neither savages nor demons but people with a certain rudimentary civilization, incapable, however, of maintaining themselves against the new-comers from the north. Nor are we to suppose that the conquest was wholly by war. There were compromise and barter and intermarriage, until at last the Aryans were in possession of middle India, and the others fled to the south, where they found refuge in the Deccan, or remained as outcastes, or became by marriage and amalgamation a part of the superior race.

But the way which proved so easy for the Aryan was to suffice for their conquerors. A thousand years ago Mohammedans came over the same mountain heights, and after centuries of varying fortunes finally controlled India, with their capitals at Delhi and at Agra, and victorious soldiers ex-

alted above the highest Brahman in the land. Partly by immigration and partly by assimilation the Muslim increased mightily, becoming a great factor in the population as in the government, making his mark clear and firm upon the institutions of the people. It was from these Mohammedan rulers that Great Britain wrested the land, and even yet they retain the pride of conquerors, and resent the intellectual advancement and superiority of the Hindus. Still, too, this religion makes progress, multitudes of low-caste people embracing the virile faith which advances them at once in social status.

Roughly, then, we divide the people, like the land, into three main divisions—the ancient people represented by numerous tribes, speaking many languages, with the outcastes, who live in the suburbs of the Hindu towns, lowest in the scale, though longest on the land; the Aryans, in part perhaps

still pure in blood but for the greater part intermarried with members of the subject races, constituting the vast majority of the people now, and the efficient factors in the production of Indian poetry, literature, philosophy and religion; and finally, the Mohammedans, new-comers, that is to say, within a thousand years, conscious of their military superiority, but, on the whole, in nothing above those who had preceded them. Besides there are other races of smaller numbers but of great interest, like the Parsis, descendants of the ancient fire-worshippers of Persia, expelled from their own country by Mohammedan invaders, and now prospering greatly under British rule. There are less than a hundred thousand of them, and they live for the greater part near Bombay. Then, too, there are Sikhs, a military race with a religion of their own, of course, since in India religion counts for everything and race for little, who

make the best of auxiliary troops under foreign leadership; and Jains, whose faith goes back to the time of Buddha. Thus if India is continental in size it is more than continental in the variety of inhabitants, and never from the earliest dawn of its history has it produced even a temporary unity or any consciousness of solidarity. Its population is more than twice that of the Roman Empire in the days of its greatest extent, and it has a greater variety of tribes and peoples than ever acknowledged the rule of the Caesars. It is a wilderness of peoples, languages, religions and customs, full of rich mines of information which await the scholars who shall exploit them.

Let us report briefly the physical features on which depends the distribution of the population. The great snow range shuts off not only men but winds, and forms a barrier against which the southern winds of the monsoon beat,

depositing their moisture. To the east of the centre the flanks are protected by trackless forests and to the west by arid plateaux and deserts, both regions, east and west, inhabited still by tribes of lawless men. Between this great range and the oceans to the south, enclosed therefore on all sides and isolated, is India with, including Burmah now, 766,597 square miles, 12,000 square miles larger than Europe if we exclude Russia. The population is 294,361,056. Most of the people live in peasant villages, only two per cent being in cities, if we count as cities all towns which contain so many as 20,000 people, while the villages are innumerable. There is, therefore, very little overcrowding in tenements, for the large cities, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Hyderabad, &c., are so few that their special conditions may be overlooked in this rapid survey.

As the people thus distributed in vil-

lages are farmers, as many as two thirds of the entire population being returned in the census as agriculturists, it follows, therefore, that the population has to do with the conditions of soil and weather most favorable to agriculture. A glance at the map of population shows this to be the fact. The densest population is in the great plain along the Ganges and its branches.

India is dependent upon the periodic winds, called monsoons, for its prosperity. They come from the south laden with moisture, and pour down the contents of their clouds upon the thirsty soil. There are two monsoons, with dry seasons intervening. The farmer watches the sky anxiously for the early and the later rain.

"August's here, no sound of thunder,
Sky is clear and weather fine,
Wife! 't is time for us to sunder,
You to your folks, I to mine."

So sings the peasant, and breaks up his family in fear of famine. In the season called Swati, the end of October and early November—

"One shower in Swati, friend, behold,
The Kurmi's ear-ring turned to gold,"

so closely are prosperity and adversity dependent upon the weather, and so surely does prosperity show itself in the purchase of adornment for the person.

The rainfall varies greatly. Along the Western Ghats, above Bombay, it is prodigious, and the rain comes on with fury. Houses which are exposed to the blast will have neither door nor window on the side from which the storm comes. A friend, long resident in Bombay, told me that within an hour of the first fall of rain he had seen men swimming in the streets. Then by way of contrast, in districts shielded by mountains there is as little as eight inches of rain in the

year, with all varieties and degrees of moisture between.

In the middle country, in the Ganges valley, the population is more than 400 to the square mile, with one district reported as possessing 1,920 to this area, and these are peasants, we must remember, dependent upon the sky and the soil for their livelihood, and living not in cities but in tiny villages. On the whole we may lay down the rule that population is large where the rainfall is great and trustworthy, and small where it fails, though this statement, like all statements about so vast a subject, is true only in a general way and with many exceptions.

While upon this subject we may refer in passing to the famines. When the monsoon fails, as fail it often does, then there is trouble at once. The peasants have little laid up against a dry day, and when, as also happens, the monsoon fails for three years in succession the effects are terrible. In

the past, in populous districts, a quarter of the people have perished, and as recently as 1899-1900 as many as 4,000,000 persons died from this cause, notwithstanding the great efforts by the government for their relief. Yet, strange as it may seem, the advance of population in general is little hindered by these calamities. The sickly, the aged, the unfit die, while the strong, young and vigorous survive. Hence, in a generation the losses are made up and the population seems almost more thriving by its terrible weeding process.

Though the population is so dense in great sections of the empire, yet on the whole India is not overcrowded. One fifth of the whole population is on one twentieth of the total area, two thirds of the people live on one quarter of the land, so that three quarters are sparsely settled in comparison. And oddly, the people are most prosperous in Eastern Bengal,

where the population is the most dense. With improved means of transportation and of agriculture, with the introduction of manufactures and the extension of irrigation, India may provide well enough for its natural increase for centuries to come, since for the decade preceding 1901 the net increase was only 1.5 per cent.

The government is paying attention to these needs, having built many thousands of miles of railway and 43,000 miles of irrigation canals, and promoted scientific agriculture, the cultivation of special products and the development of mines and other natural resources.

The people are farmers, as we have stated, and this in so great a proportion that the other occupations are small indeed. No other calling represents as much as six per cent of the population, while commerce claims scarcely more than one per cent. Evidently the people are still in the stage

of development where wants are few and money little needed. We think of our highly organized machinery of civilization as being natural, and are unmindful of the fact that the greater part of the race get on very well without banks, or merchants, or machines, or lawyers, or doctors. In India there are few men of leisure, only five millions entered in the census as such, and of these more than four millions are common beggars.

In most countries females outnumber males, but in India the reverse is true, 963 of the former to 1,000 of the latter, the discrepancy being caused probably by a relative inattention to female infants, for though there seems nowadays to be little direct infanticide, the baby girl is not welcome, and if she die there is small regret.

If she grow up she will not be taught to read save in exceptional circumstances. Nor will the boy, as a rule, for in all this vast population only one

man in ten can read and write, and only one woman in one hundred and forty-four, and this includes the statistics for Burmah, where the Buddhists for centuries have maintained schools in the temples for a large proportion of the people. Probably no other civilized people is so ignorant. The reasons for it are significant of the condition of the masses: life has too little outlook; there is no incentive to the labor involved; the people are too submissive to fate, too content with their condition, too hopeless of bettering it. So they do not establish schools, nor attend them if established. It has been maintained that the low-caste folk are incapable of intellectual training, but like all such statements founded upon prejudice, this is mistaken. The schools established by missionaries prove that outcastes, low castes, and even primitive hill folk may all be taught, and that all respond to effort in their behalf.

With illiteracy is poverty. But we must not judge by our standards. A man is as poor as he feels, and his feelings are by way of contrast. Caste fixes one's position irrevocably, and therefore the individual compares himself only with those who are in like condition. Hence, for the most part, the sting of poverty, self-depreciation, is escaped. But the poverty is there, nevertheless.

In a climate like India's, clothes are for ornament, and nakedness, more or less complete, is the rule. The native covers the head instinctively, and cares little for the rest of the body. Hence, excepting for ornament, clothes need not be provided. But ornaments must be. Indian civilization is essentially ornate. The great man surrounds himself with pomp and splendor. I commented adversely upon the extravagant railway station in Bombay to a friend: "The people have to pay for this, and it is too fine:

BABATUL TEMPLE, UMRITSAR, INDIA

a simpler building would have answered every purpose." But he replied: "No native would make your criticism. It is a government railway, and in India governments are expected to be magnificent!" The same spirit is in the common people. When the rain comes,

"The Kurmi's ear-ring turns to gold."

Asking my friend of the government college in Lucknow as to his observation of the condition of the people, he replied: "They are prosperous on the whole. One sees more jewelry worn than when I first came out."

As clothes are not needed, no more is furniture. Again, great houses and elaborate establishments are for display. The common man needs little. His house is merely a shelter. The climate for the greater part keeps him out of doors, and he seeks only a refuge from beasts, snakes, rain and the greatest heat. Such requirements

are readily met, and his hut, which to our eyes lacks everything, to his thought is complete.

His food is as simple as his house. He will not eat beef, nor any animal food, not even an egg, because of religious prejudice, which has become an invincible repugnance. He often uses a leaf for a plate, his fingers for knife, fork and spoon, and the ground or the floor for a table. Hence expense and labor are reduced to the lowest terms and the simple life is demonstrated as feasible and satisfactory. My professorial friend on a visit to Calcutta found on his hotel bill a charge of a rupee a day for food furnished his servant. Whereupon he summoned him and asked if he ate a rupee a day. The man opened his eyes in astonishment and informed his master that not a man in the wide world could eat a rupee a day. Whereupon my friend told him to buy his own food in the bazaar, and he went away

vastly content with an allowance of a quarter of a rupee. But such a servant was pampered. The average income in India of a peasant is of the smallest, and on this the family must be supported and provision made for funerals and marriages. If daily life is simple, such occasions are complex. Marriage is an affair of dower, and the ceremonies are elaborate and prolonged, leaving the great majority of parents in hopeless debt. It is no wonder that when the rains fail there is immediate distress with starvation not very far away.

The outward life is barren and even austere in its poverty, so that one is tempted to look upon the people as savages; but how extraordinary is the complexity of the social life. In this, our life in the United States is in comparison primitive and undeveloped. Take marriage, for example. How wonderful the contrast! The fundamental rule in India is that the woman may

not choose for herself, and the second rule is like unto it in rigidity, she may not remain unmarried, and only less universal, once married she may not marry again. None knows precisely how the custom of infant marriages originated, but it is now something fortunately unique, a custom which separates the people of India from all others, and which bears with it a long list of ills. It is complicated further with the rules of caste, a woman may marry into a higher caste, but never into a lower caste, and with innumerable notions and rites and rules of religion, so that the native is bound and loses in his family relationships the freedom he seemed to gain by the simplicity of his surroundings and his ability to enjoy dignity without encumbrances.

In this cursory survey, all too fragmentary and hasty, of the outward appearances of the Indian people, religion must be included. We shall have

something to say of its spirit later on, and here we can refer only to its outer forms.

The great mass of the people (207,000,000 of them) are classed as Hindu. This does not mean that they have the same religion, in our sense, for they worship many different gods in many different ways, but it signifies that they acknowledge the supremacy of the Brahmans, and accept the caste system. Within this great mass are religions and sects innumerable, some of them hostile, many of them heretical, and some of them depraved. The Brahmans will minister to any and to all, for their own faith is different from all the rest and is incommunicable to other castes. Hence they accommodate themselves to the weakness and ignorance of others, as if a philosophic theist among ourselves, thinking it impossible to teach the common folk, and recognizing in a condescending way our religions as forces for good and the

best that we can comprehend, should be ready to minister, for a price, indifferently in a Quaker meeting, an Episcopal church, a Roman Catholic cathedral, a Mormon temple or a Christian Science congregation, classing all together as "Christian," and holding his own philosophy as the essential truth of which the others are mere shadows and outward forms.

Next to the Hindus in importance are the Mohammedans. It is a relief to turn from the gaudy and dirty Hindu temples to the empty and clean and often magnificent mosques. There is a solemnity, a simplicity, a solidity, which appeals profoundly to our religious instincts. No pictures, no statues, no altar, no music, but here and there a worshipper, with his face turned towards Mecca and his knees bent in prayer. There are more than 62,000,000 of these worshippers of God, the descendants of the conquerors of India and their proselytes. The faith con-

stantly increases, partly because its natural growth is more rapid than with the population in general, and partly because new believers are won from members of the lower Hindu castes. The religion, however, has not remained pure. It too is divided into sects, and it has been influenced by Hinduism in various matters of belief and practice so that some Mohammedans unhesitatingly join in the Hindu festivals.

Third in importance are the peoples of primitive religions, who have not yet accepted the caste system. But they also gradually yield to their surroundings and become incorporated in the prevailing religion. From them many have been converted also to Christianity, and it is probable that still greater gains will be made in the future. Besides, there are Jains and Buddhists and Parsis and Christians, making altogether a wilderness of religions, with all varieties of faith, from

the most philosophic to the most puerile and impure.

As with religion, so with language, we have a vast variety with wide differences. Some of the languages cannot express at all ideas which are among the simplest and most commonplace known to us. Some of them are monosyllabic and as simple as words communicating thought can be, others are highly complex, so polysyllabic that a whole thought is expressed in a word, so intricate that a hundred forms are given of a single tense of a single verb, while still others are refined, copious in vocabulary, finished in structure, and expressive of the purest emotions and the noblest thoughts of which humanity is capable. Again we make a threefold division: we remember that Mongoloid people came into India from the northeast. Two millions speak languages which belong to the Indo-Chinese family. Then next, the earlier inhabitants, driven

south into the Deccan, speak the languages called Dravidian; of them there are 60,000,000; while 221,000,000 people speak languages which are classed as Indo-European.

Our survey would be incomplete indeed were we to leave out caste. As we have seen, its acceptance is the acceptance of Hinduism, and its influence extends even into the Mohammedan faith. It is perhaps the most characteristic feature of Indian social life. How it arose we do not know, probably by an exaggeration of influences known elsewhere, race pride and prejudice, religious aloofness, aristocratic exclusiveness, and finally trade-unionism. Caste is the most complicated and the most powerful social organization known on earth. Let me conclude this chapter by quoting at length from the Census of India for 1901:

"For my own part I have always been much impressed by the difficulty

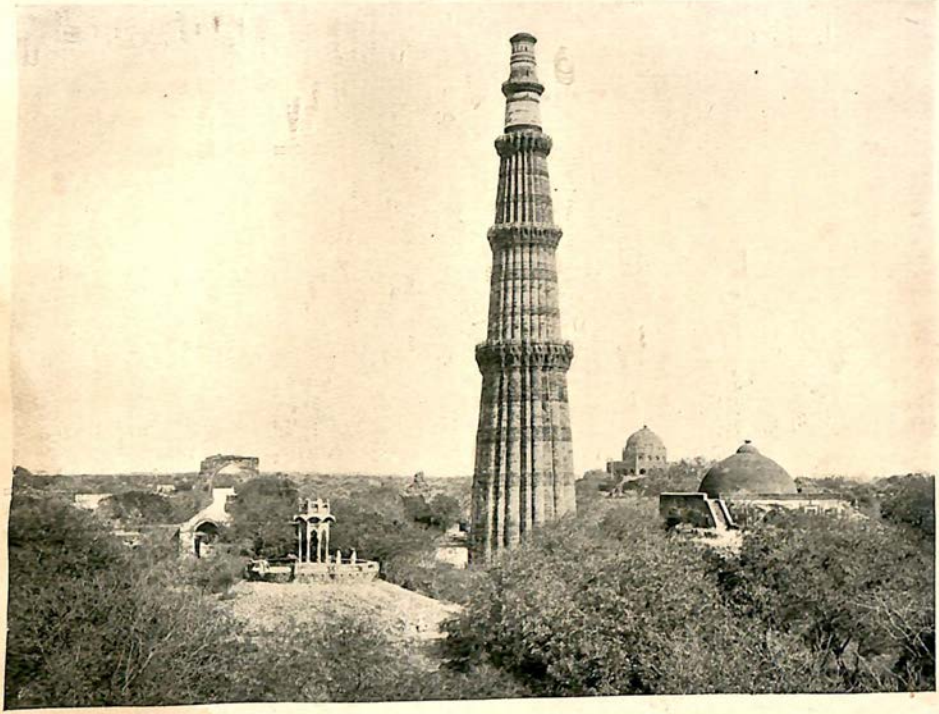
of conveying to European readers who have no experience of India, even an approximate idea of the extraordinary complexity of the social system which is involved in the word caste. At the risk of being charged with frivolity, I shall therefore venture on an illustration, based on one which I published in 'Blackwood's Magazine' some dozen years ago, of a caste expressed in the terms of an English social group. I said then, let us take an instance, and in order to avoid the fumes of bewilderment that are thrown off by uncouth names, let us frame it on English lines. Let us imagine the great tribe of Smith, the 'noun of multitude,' as a famous headmaster used to call it, to be transformed by art magic into a caste organized on the Indian model, in which all the subtle nuances of social merit and demerit which 'Punch' and the society papers love to chronicle should have been set and hardened into positive regu-

lations affecting the intermarriage of families. The caste thus formed would trace its origin back to a mythical eponymous ancestor, the first Smith, who converted the rough stone hatchet into the bronze battle-axe, and took his name from the 'smooth' weapons that he wrought for his tribe. Bound together by this tie of common descent, they would recognize as a cardinal doctrine of their community the rule that a Smith must marry a Smith, and could by no possibility marry a Brown, a Jones, or a Robinson. But over and above this general canon two other modes or principles of grouping within the caste would be conspicuous. First of all, the entire caste of Smith would be split up into an indefinite number of 'in-marrying' clans, based upon all sorts of trivial distinctions. Brewing Smiths and baking Smiths, hunting Smiths and shooting Smiths, temperance Smiths and licensed-victualler Smiths, Smiths with

double-barrelled names and hyphens, Smiths with double-barrelled names without hyphens, conservative Smiths, radical Smiths, tinker Smiths, tailor Smiths, Smiths of Mercia, Smiths of Wessex—all these and all other imaginable varieties of the tribe Smith would be, as it were, crystallized by an inexorable law forbidding the members of any of these groups to marry beyond the circle marked out by the clan name. Thus the Unionist Mr. Smith could only marry a Unionist Miss Smith and could not think of a home-rule damsel; the free-trade Smiths would have nothing to say to the protectionists; a hyphen Smith could only marry a hyphen Smith, and so on. Secondly, and this is the point which I more especially wish to bring out here, running through this endless series of clans we should find another principle at work breaking up each clan into three or four smaller groups which form a sort of ascending

scale of social distinction. Thus the clan of hyphen Smiths, which we take to be the cream of caste,—the Smiths who have attained to the crowning glory of double names securely welded together by hyphens,—would be again divided into, let me say, Anglican, Dissenting and Salvationist hyphen Smiths, taking rank in that order. Now the rule of this trio of groups would be that a man of the highest or Anglican order might marry a girl of his own group or of the two lower groups; that a man of the second or Dissenting group might take a Dissenting or Salvationist wife, while a Salvationist man would be restricted to his own group. A woman, it will be observed, could under no circumstances marry down into a group below her, and it would be thought eminently desirable for her to marry into a higher group. Other things being equal, it is clear that two thirds of the Anglican girls would get no hus-

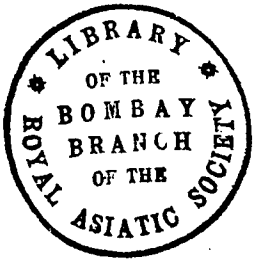
bands and two thirds of the Salvationist men no wives. These are some of the restrictions which would control the process of match-making among the Smiths if they were organized in a caste of the Indian type. There would also be restrictions as to food. The different in-marrying clans would be precluded from marrying together, and their possibilities of reciprocal entertainment would be limited to those products of the confectioner's shop into the composition of which water, the most fatal and effective vehicle of ceremonial impurity, had not entered. Fire purifies, water pollutes. It would follow in fact that they could eat chocolates and other forms of sweetmeats together, but could not drink tea or coffee and could only partake of ices if they were made without water and were served on metal not porcelain plates. I am sensible of having trenched on the limits of official and scientific pro-



THE KUTUB MINAR, DELHI, INDIA

priety in attempting to describe an ancient and famous institution in unduly vivacious language, but the parallel is as accurate as any parallel drawn from the other end of the world can well be, and when one wishes to convey a vivid idea one cannot afford to be over particular as to the terms one uses."

IV
India, its Spirit and Problems



IV

India, its Spirit and Problems

THE spirit of India is expressed most clearly in its religion. So its sons tell us, and so the impartial student must decide. Some writers set forth religion as the cause of the degradation or advancement of a people, while others teach that it is itself the result of the condition of the nation. There is truth in both views, since the condition of a people reacts upon its religion and its religion acts upon its condition. Without discussing the question we point out the clear fact that in India the religion is closely in accord with all the circumstances and conditions of the people's life.

We may find the widest variety of belief and practice, from the dim, confused, irrational cults of the Dravidian peoples to the high philosophy of the Brahmans, and in so vast a mass one

finds with difficulty a clue which will reduce it to order. How should one describe in a few pages Christianity with its many divisions, its antagonistic sects and teachings? More difficult still is it to make intelligible the tangle of worships which we call the religion of India. But, with a clear consciousness of the imperfection of our result, we shall make the attempt.

At the bottom we find a mass of unsystematized, unformulated and unorganized beliefs which we should call superstitions, fears of mysterious influences and powers which cannot be defined or described, like the fears men feel in passing through a dark wood at night, or the sensations of children as they look into a deep cave, or the feelings which survive in civilization as to the number thirteen and seeing the moon over the left shoulder. These feelings are attached to places and objects, to a strange tree or a peculiar stone or a mysterious ani-

mal or an unusual man or woman. They are a combination of wonder and of fear, and result in a combination of rites, some of simple worship, the expression of the wonder, and some of propitiation, the expression of the fear. Especially animals are looked upon as divine, snakes and tigers and monkeys and many others. Divine, did I write? The word has too sacred a meaning; unnatural, or supernatural, or uncannny, or ghostly would be more fitting. Naturally the rites are of the simplest, as boys knock wood to avert bad luck, a remnant of ancient heathenism still surviving among us. In this lowest stage there is constant change. If, for example, a tree which is supposed to be worshipful is cut down by some foreigner, nothing is thought of the catastrophe, nor is any explanation forthcoming as to what has become of the mysterious power which had been supposed to dwell in it.

As these men worship powerful and dreaded animals, so they worship powerful and dreaded men living and dead. Before the grave of an Englishman who had been much feared the simple-minded natives made offerings, cigars and brandy and the like, supposing that after death he could be propitiated by gifts of the articles he was addicted to in life. Stranger yet, a story is told of an official who became a god while still alive. His worshippers would grovel at his feet and offer gifts, while he cursed them and declared himself no god. But his affirmations did not affect their faith; a god he was and a god he must remain.

Above this condition, where, let me repeat, the terms god and divine are too exalted for the objects of worship, we find an infinite series of gradations. There are local gods with histories and priests and elaborate cults, and there are universal gods, who

may be described nearly in the terms we use to describe the Christian's God. There are in connection with these various deities all forms of rites: some of them grossly indecent, some refined and pure; some shockingly cruel and others impressive and well ordered; some of them wildly extravagant; others simple and plain. For as we have a continent in extent and a continent in the number of peoples, so we have more than a continental variety in religion. But still, excluding only the Mohammedans, the Parsis, the Sikhs and the Dravidian peoples not yet reclaimed, all are ranked as Hindus. How can we explain such an anomaly? How can we reconcile oneness of faith with a multiplicity of contradictory beliefs? Well, it is not a oneness of faith. Hinduism, as we have explained, means merely the mass of those who accept the supremacy of the Brahmans and the caste system. Within those broad

limits every one may believe and worship as he will.

For the religion of India in its highest development is the worship of the "Ultimate and the Absolute," as Mr. Okakura told us in our second chapter. Can we get that meaning clearly before us? In spite of its abstract nature, let us try. The Ultimate and the Absolute represent the reality which is from everlasting to everlasting, which never changes, and which is infinite, that is, limitless. Therefore it is the opposite of all which we can see or touch or define. All these things pass away. Sunshine and shadow, day and night, leaves and flowers, winter and summer, the trees, the hills themselves, the earth, the sun, the universe, all began to be, all change, all pass away, all therefore are the very opposite of the Ultimate, which is changeless and forever the same. How shall we define it? Perhaps by negatives: it is not the fire, the rain, the sun. the earth. man's

mind, the universe. But how shall we define it more closely? We cannot, for to define it is to limit it.

I was once in the market-place of a city in the Deccan, listening to a Christian Brahman preach the gospel. A student from a college in Ceylon translated his words for me in excellent English. As the preacher spoke of the nature of God, infinite, all good, all wise, all loving, a Hindu in the congregation began vehemently to contradict. The dispute became so hot that it was proposed to leave the street and, entering a garden near at hand, to sit down under the trees and have the discussion to an end. The substance of it was this: The Hindu asked the Christian as follows: "You declare God to be infinite?" "Yes." "What is the meaning of 'infinite'?" "It means 'limitless.'" "And what part of speech is 'good'?" "'Good' is an adjective." "And what is the grammatical function of an adjective?" "To limit a

noun." "How then do you apply an adjective to God, calling him good, and thus limiting the limitless?"

By this philosophy, therefore, God cannot be described, no adjective applies to him, and we can neither preach about him nor urge any to worship him. How then can we have anything to do with him? In the conversation described above the Christian Brahman took his turn in asking questions: "You believe in God as infinite?" "Yes, I so believe." "And you say that no adjective can be applied to him?" "I so affirm." "How then can you distinguish him from nothing?" That becomes the question, how can you distinguish him from nothing? You cannot by logic or discourse, but you may by long processes of contemplation or of asceticism bring yourself to a place where you will understand. Then it will appear to you that God is the only reality, and that everything which men regard as real is an illu-

sion,—earth, and men, and sky, and devils, and gods, and life, and death, and my own soul, all are such stuff as dreams, having no real existence, for that which is is the Infinite. My own existence is illusion like all the rest, excepting as I come to identify myself with the changeless, timeless, limitless, indescribable Ultimate and Absolute.

This, then, is the height of religion, but manifestly it is unattainable for most people. Men with families, engaged in the struggle for the lives of those they love, believe that wife and children and parents and neighbors and their own selves are real. It is only by withdrawal from all these that a man may convince himself at last after years of rigid discipline that nothing exists but God. So the common people may be left to their delusions, for they cannot be led to this true worship of the Ultimate and the Absolute. Hence, too, the Brahman who has at-

tained salvation may with condescension assist at the celebration of any form of service, since all are alike true or untrue to him.

To the common people such a man is an incomprehensible mystery, and because incomprehensible he is therefore divine, for in India the divine is nothing else than the mysterious, the incomprehensible and the powerful. Mystery and power, these under a vast variety of forms are the divinities of all the people, of the dullest peasant as of the highest scholar; and as the philosophic Brahman delights in such disputes as I have described above, where the mind at last is "in endless mazes lost," so the common man loves his own special brand of the incomprehensible. He looks up with awe to the men above him and worships them. At the great Mela at Allahabad, in the triangle formed by the junction of the Ganges and the Jumna, I have seen lines of filthy as-

cetics, naked, repulsive, with foul and matted hair, followed by companies of men and women worshipping them and believing in their superior and divine holiness. Only let us remember that "holiness" does not mean of necessity uprightness, but attainment of supernatural comprehension and power.

Naturally magic flourishes. It is supposed that man can attain power over the gods by his rites, and stories are told of elaborate plans formed by the gods to prevent saints from continuing in holiness because of the fear that the saint would become greater than the gods themselves and compel them to do his bidding. Perhaps the most popular of all the sacred books of India contains a long story of the creation of a particularly attractive and sensual universe for the corruption of a saint who had successfully resisted all the temptations of our world.

As the men of the highest intelligence

feel themselves forbidden to teach the common people, they are left to their debasing superstitions and to a confused medley of beliefs. Superstitions born of yesterday are mingled with traditions three thousand years old; relatively high and pure teachings of God and morality will be found close beside fantastic and immoral cults. Any one may found any religion he pleases, and new forms of belief are set forth continuously. But after the founder dies and the enthusiasm of the first generation dies, the sect gradually gives up its peculiarities and sinks back into the ordinary fashions of the mass of the population. Within this complicated mass of beliefs and rites we may find most of the distinctions and differences familiar to ourselves though quaintly expressed: thus believers in a rigid predestination, a salvation by grace, are designated as the kitten sect, since they are carried to salvation as a cat carries its kit-

ten, by the nape of the neck; while believers in free will and salvation through our own efforts are the monkey sect, who are saved as is the monkey who clings tight with his two arms around his mother's neck. There are great denominations which believe in a Creator who formed all things, and one which teaches that all things flow forth from God by an eternal necessity.

But while there are resemblances so are there differences. Christians believe in the immortality of the soul, as do the Hindus, but the contrast here is striking. Christians believe that God created man, and that there was a time when we were not. Hindus believe that the soul is uncreated, and that it has already existed forever as it will continue to live forever. Christians suppose that at death the soul enters "an eternal state" where it will continue forever, but Hindus think of death merely as an incident in the long chain of endless changes which go on

without beginning or end, unless indeed in rare instances some one attain salvation. Salvation to the Christian means heaven, but to the educated Hindu it means absorption in the Deity and the loss of our individual existence. Save as it finds this salvation, the soul goes on and on forever, and exists in a vast variety of forms—on earth, in heaven, in hell, as god, devil, insect, animal, man, having all experiences and undergoing every possible form of happiness and woe, though on the whole suffering predominates. Thus a series of stories about Buddha very popular in Ceylon represents him as having adventures during many lives, and mentions him as living in the following existences: ascetic eighty-three times; a monarch fifty-eight times; the divinity of a tree forty-three times; a religious teacher twenty-six times; a courtier, a Brahman, a prince, each twenty-four times; a nobleman twenty-three times; a learned man

HINDU FUNERAL PYRES AT THE GANGES RIVER, BENARES, INDIA

twenty-two times; the god Sekra twenty times; an ape eight times; a merchant thirteen times; a rich man twelve times; a deer, a lion, each ten times; the bird Hansa eight times; a snipe, an elephant, each six times; a fowl, a slave, a golden eagle, each five times; a horse, a bull, a Maha Brahma, a peacock, a serpent, each four times; a potter, an outcast, a guana, each three times; a fish, an elephant driver, a rat, a jackal, a cow, a woodpecker, a thief, a pig, each two times; a dog, a curer of snake bites, a gambler, a mason, a smith, a devil dancer, a scholar, a silversmith, a carpenter, a waterfowl, a frog, a hare, a cock, a kite, a jungle-fowl, a kindura, each once. Of course this list makes only a beginning of Buddha's innumerable lives, giving only those of which incidents have been handed down. He was never born as less than a snipe, nor in one of the greater hells, nor as a female.

The Indian imagination delights in

these extravagances. Thus for a measure of time: take a cube of ten miles' measurement, composed of the hardest rock, let the woman who has the softest touch of all the women in the world once in a hundred years touch it once with her lightest touch, using the most delicate fabric known. Beyond all doubt each touch will make some impression, and when by successive touches the whole cube is worn away to nothingness you have your unit, with which you can measure periods which are really long!

We may ask by what is our future existence determined, what is the rule and order of our fate? And the answer is karma. As the Christian believes in a God who rules and by whose righteous judgment men are rewarded or punished, so the Hindu believes in an invariable law (karma) of cause and effect. Every cause must have an effect and every effect must have a cause. Thus, our present life is an effect: it

began to be so many years ago, and it is happy or miserable. The cause must be sought in some former life. Because we then were virtuous we now are happy, or because we then were sinful we now suffer. Our past deeds work out their recompense now. In like fashion our lives are causes; the deeds we do shall live after us and produce a future in accord with them. Once happy now because of a good life in the past, we may enter the next existence in a state of misery because of our present evil deeds. All we do in life is balanced at our death and the net result carried to a new account, or, rather, embodied in a new form of life. Thus, the net outcome of a life may have the value of a flea, then a flea will embody it; or a god, when a god will enshrine it. When now the balance is used up, whether it be only sufficient for the life of a flea or ample for the existence of a god in the highest heaven, or so awful that it means ages in the lowest

hell, the condition changes, flea, god or devil dies and a new existence begins once more. Thus one may go at once from heaven to hell, or from some lower form to a higher, though the transitions are usually not extreme, and it is a toilsome task for one who has fallen to recover place and opportunity again. Thus are explained the inequalities in the present world: Some good men are miserable because of evil done in former life; they will get their reward by and by. Some evil men are prosperous because of virtue in the former world, and their punishment for the present offences as surely awaits them in the world to come. Thus the universe shapes itself into "three worlds," past, present and to come, instead of, as with the Christians, the present and the future. The result of this teaching is twofold: first, submit to fate; your present lot is the result of former deeds; and second, know that existence is misery. Hap-

piness may endure for a season, but surely evil comes as night follows the day. Life, therefore, is wearisome, and the highest gospel is the teaching of an escape from our individual existence.

We have written of goodness as holiness, but in the development of religion in India religion counts for more than ethics. Forms and ceremonies, prayers and formulae, especially in unknown tongues, the ministration of priests and the maintenance of ceremonial cleanliness, are the main things. A woman touched by a little child in an early morning hour cried out, "Poor me!" for she was obliged to begin over again the long course of ceremonies almost completed and necessary before she could undertake her household tasks. A traveller who bought an article of food from a vender at a railway station and helped himself to his purchase had to take the whole stock, as his touch had polluted

it. The ritual varies with the different cults, but the same underlying ideas obtain with all. One form of holiness is right conduct, but it is not on an equality with ceremony as an approach to God.

One may well dwell upon these religious forms and ideas, for they seem especially to represent the spirit of India, like a mental photograph of the whole. As we cannot think of our friend without imagining his body, or of it save as a symbol of him, as we may begin with either the outward or the inward, so interwoven are they in his unity of person, so it is with this people. Let us then review both sides briefly.

A vast continent, with varying sceneries, races, climates and conditions, enclosed by great mountains on the north and wide oceans on the other sides, it is a world in itself, yet a world unlike the rest of the globe, with special characteristics of its own. Its tem-

perature is excessive, its dependence upon periodic rains extreme, its fertility great. Its climate makes man at once submissive and irritable, deadens sustained effort and kills ambition. In it he comes to an early maturity, attains his measure soon, and rests in a middle age which is content with small success. Nature seems supreme. Its fertility makes great labor unnecessary, and also overpowers man so that he is helpless before beast and jungle, famine and pestilence, — a land where vegetation is grandiose and over-luxuriant, so that humanity is insignificant notwithstanding its mighty numbers.

Here man early reached a high degree of civilization. He conquered the land, but never thoroughly. He worships beasts and serpents, and is devoured by them. He needs but little, but has never learned to make the little certain so that it can be depended upon, but learns to submit to forces

stronger than himself, accepting the inevitable. The population is formed layer on layer, ancient peoples who have made no advance since the dawn of civilization and other races and peoples superimposed, each with its own status and its own degree of advancement. Its history is the story of successive invasions, of prodigal luxury for the conquerors and their certain debasement until ready for the coming of some new virile people who repeat the same experience; of a land where the lower accept their estate and worship men who are more highly placed; where dreams of equality and liberty have never come, and where the overhanging and overpowering belief is in fate; where that which is is that which shall be, and where there is no desire for any new thing under the sun; where none the less man has reflected profoundly, considering the deepest problems of life and destiny and being; where high social position depends

not upon wealth, nor power, nor intelligence, but on birth; where the ideal is not success, nor comfort, nor fame, nor wealth, nor rank, but the mastery of all outer circumstances and the supremacy of the spirit; where asceticism, philosophy and earthly indifference to the world are the attainments most sought. "My pundit," said my friend in Bombay, "would not leave his seat and go to the window to see the greatest spectacle on earth."

When now we ask ourselves for the specific problems for India and for their solution, we are inclined to say these things are too great for us; let us leave them to the slow working of natural laws and to the direction of the Divine Spirit, ourselves meanwhile content with the different fate allotted to us. But such an answer would be in harmony with the spirit of India and not with the spirit of the West, which seeks to master nature and to make natural forces our servants. But pro-

test as we may against fatalistic content we are certain that the man is doomed who attempts, in Kipling's phrase, to "hustle the East." True, remedies can be found, but they will be slow in their effects, and India can solve the problems which have been caused by millenniums of existence only by centuries of endeavor. Here will be no instance of a people born in a day or of a regeneration by miraculous transformation. Here reform contends against hoary traditions, a society bound by custom which is stronger than life, and the forces of material nature.

Manifestly we begin with the last named, nature. There is no question in India of an American social condition, of villages with wide streets and trim gardens and pleasant cottages. We cannot anticipate a time when the laboring man shall earn a dollar and a half a day, and when the man of moderate circumstances may antici-

pate a thousand a year. We shall not look forward to a future when our machinery of civilization, our houses and furniture and clothing and food shall be introduced. East shall continue to be East, India will not become America, and in outward conditions there shall continue to be a great gulf fixed between the two. Similarity in these things is not even desirable. The Hindu has his own standards, and they are in accordance with his needs. He has lessons for us, as he shows how self-respect can be maintained on the merest fraction of that which we regard as essential. It would indeed be a calamity were our notions to prevail everywhere. Surely his is not after all the lowlier ideal, to be rid of impedimenta, and to seek highest satisfaction not in the abundance of things he possesses but in life itself. There are times when we may well envy the simplicity and plainness of life in the great peninsula.

But admitting all this and insisting upon it, still the people may be delivered from actual want, from the poverty which does not know what the satisfaction of hunger means, and from the recurrent calamities which decimate whole sections. Better agricultural methods, irrigation on a still larger scale, the cultivation of regions which are scantily peopled, the exploitation of natural resources which are still untouched, all this and more can be accomplished, so that there may be an increase for ordinary life and provision for years of scarcity. This would require progress in wealth, but at a moderate pace, with life continuing upon the ancient lines.

The problems of government are scarcely less arduous. It has always been far too expensive, and so it continues in our day. The British government has given unexampled peace to the people, and justice. It is incorruptible and impartial. It studies the

needs of the people and it seeks to further their interests. In the second chapter we quoted words of high approval from native writers. But there is another side. The government is terribly expensive, and it is foreign. British standards of life cannot be lowered to the native level, so that salaries must be paid which will maintain the English ways and which will tempt competent men to a life of exile. Hence salaries are very high, with ample allowances and pensions and payments to widows and orphans. The home government exacts no tribute, yet an immense amount of money goes year by year to England, sent home by English officials in payment for English luxuries and necessities. There is an army of civil servants of foreign birth, and regiments of troops, who are supported by the native treasury. A visit to the cantonments of a crack British regiment astonished me at its provision for the needs of the men, ev-

ery three soldiers having a native servant. Any other policy would be suicidal; the foreigner cannot live as at home, but the native pays the bills.

Besides, the foreign occupation crushes the native spirit. Every native gives way to the Anglo-Saxon as to his conqueror. White men constitute a caste by themselves, and the consequent servility on the part of the men who own the land is degrading to both ruled and ruler. In such circumstances a vigorous national life is impossible. We cannot conceive of India as coming forward to play a great part in the future of the world, as making great contributions of its own to our science, arts and literature, while its children are so humiliated.

The solution would seem to be an increasing measure of self-government. This is demanded by a growing public sentiment, and is awarded in a degree by the employment of natives in the civil and military service, yet only

THE TOWERS OF SILENCE, BOMBAY, WHERE THE PARSEE DEAD ARE EXPOSED

in a small degree, for the positions of large pay and influence are reserved for white men. None else, it is argued, are capable. Foreign writers complain that even as subordinates native officials are arrogant and corrupt and inefficient. Doubtless there are grounds for the accusation, but none the less India can have a true future only as the ideal is kept steadily in view, and as the British government recognizes its position as one of trust, holding it not for glory nor for gain but for the interests of the people and for their advancement. The young men must be taught honesty and patriotism. There is little yet of either. How could it be otherwise with the story of the past before us and its influence all pervading among the people? Patriotism has been impossible, and now it is only slowly kindled; but without it there can be neither true dignity nor true responsibility. The same great principles obtain throughout the world in

society and in physics. Government must be by the people and for the people; not, it is true, on the pattern everywhere of England or of the United States, — as well expect English country houses and American villages everywhere, — but adapted to varying circumstances and needs. England has proved herself worthy to rule. She only has made a success of empires across the seas. She only has sent forth successions of noble and self-sacrificing men to serve her in foreign lands. But to all the rest she must add the highest gift of all, the capacity and the right of self-government. It will be her highest praise if she can make her rule unnecessary and bring at last the day when India shall take its place among independent empires.

But that is in the dim future. Immediately there are more pressing needs. We have seen how small is the percentage of educated men and how infinitesimal the number of women who

can read. The problem of education is almost the greatest at the present time—so great that it is baffling and yet imperative. Thus far the government has confined its attention to the training of the few. Young men are taught that they may be fitted for the public service. Entrance to public life is the motive which sends the brightest sons of well-to-do families to the colleges. They are taught the studies which belong to our own institutions, and acquit themselves, as we should expect, with credit. The larger problem of the masses is almost untouched. Yet while it is unsolved India will continue as it is, the prey to superstition and tradition and disaster. Only enlightenment can break the chains which bind the people, and make possible for them a glimpse into the higher world. Mission schools succeed with the few; it remains for the government to undertake the problem for the mass. How shall this be accom-

plished, whence shall come the funds, the teachers, and how the desire shall be awakened where it does not now exist, are questions calling at once for the wisest statesmanship and the broadest philanthropy. Such an education, we need not add, should not be modelled upon our own. The people of India have their own difficulties and they should be taught to meet them. There are already noble efforts in progress for such training as will fit them for the struggle for existence, making them better farmers, more expert mechanics, and more competent workers in their various occupations. Education thus answers the two questions already discussed—how the people shall be prepared for self-government and how they shall be relieved from the burden of crushing poverty. Science is given us for the mastery of nature, to make man at once intelligent and free. Adapted to India it will accomplish these two tasks. Man will no

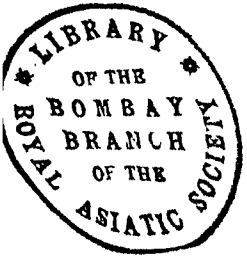
longer be the prey of superstitions, surrounded by imaginary foes, and he will be armed against his real antagonists, learning how to live to best advantage and to highest purpose. Education must be the means to all higher ends.

Religion we have left to the last. It is the greatest problem of all and the most pressing. We are far from advocating the introduction of a new sectarianism, but the most sympathetic review of conditions in India must reveal the need for a new gospel. Very much which goes under the head of our own religion is indeed unnecessary. Its introduction would only bring fresh confusion. The Hindus will not accept Christianity as bound up with our civilization, for that, as we have seen, is not suited to their needs and is repugnant to their taste. Nor will they accept our philosophical doctrines. In metaphysics they are past masters, and they are not prepared to sit at the

feet of Western scholars. But fortunately, in our day Christianity is returning to its first simplicity, and in the teaching of Christ there is neither East nor West, but the gospel for a common humanity.

Indian religion is a complex mass of cult and philosophy. Christianity should be taught in its simplest form, as the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. As the first it will free the people from their bondage to fear, from their superstitions, from their reliance upon priests and ceremonies, and will give each man his value as in vital relationship to God. The second will break down caste and exclusiveness, and teach men not to call each other common or unclean but to recognize their common and mutual relationship and duties. Caste isolates race from race, class from class, guild from guild, family from family. Philosophical religion completes the isolation by separating the

individual and making him seek salvation for himself in meditation or by asceticism. Christianity breaks all this down, making service of others, even the outcastes, the highest worship, and bringing all men together as brothers. It is this inner regeneration which India chiefly needs. With it accomplished, all that is best will follow, and we shall go there then, not from idle curiosity, but to learn the lessons it can teach us, of simplicity and spirituality and the freedom of the soul from the trammels of the outer world.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V
China, its People and Customs

V

China, its People and Customs

LET us think of the United States east of the Mississippi, with Texas, Missouri, Arkansas and Iowa added, filled with more than three hundred millions of inhabitants, and we can form a picture of China. This territory is divided into eighteen provinces, and its chief physical features are three great rivers, with plains, mountain ranges, hills in endless variety, and boundless resources. Besides, to the northeast is Manchuria, to the north Mongolia, and to the west and northwest Tibet, Ili and Kokonor. The whole is under Chinese control, one third of Asia, one tenth of the habitable globe, constituting the greatest independent empire the world has ever known in population and in duration.

Its chief characteristic is isolation.

It is bounded by mountain ranges, deserts, pathless wastes and the broad sea. From the dawn of history—and this conventional phrase here means a really immemorial antiquity—the empire has been not only free and independent but self-contained and self-reliant. Unlike India it has never known an invasion which has modified the customs or the ideas of the people, for although foreigners have repeatedly conquered it, they have been powerless to influence the life of the people, but have themselves submitted to ways and manners which are stronger than the most triumphant arms.

Not only has the empire thus maintained its solidarity and its traditions, but it has preserved and strengthened its pride. Could we conceive of the Mississippi Valley in isolation, its people having for thousands of years no vital connection with any other civilized folk, rude Indian tribes or

A VERY OLD CHINESE UNIVERSITY WHERE MANY FAMOUS SCHOLARS HAVE STUDIED

some semi-civilized peoples constituting the world outside its own boundaries, we can understand how a pride of race might be cultivated which would regard the indigenous type of civilization as the only enlightenment, and all the rest of the world as barbarous. So in fact has it been with China. Its own civilization is so ancient that its origin is wholly lost. The people in their own thought have always been enlightened. No great teachers ever came to them from other lands, no adventurous travellers brought back from beyond the mountains or the seas the treasures of foreign parts. Save for a few men who penetrated India, and for the coming of the Buddhist religion, no debt is acknowledged to any but to themselves. Thus the empire becomes "The Middle Kingdom," the middle of the earth, the centre of enlightenment, surrounded with outer darkness and a fringe of savages. We must dwell upon this feature and em-

phasize it, for it is the key to our explanation at once of the institutions and character of the people and of the problems with which modern statesmanship, science, philanthropy and missions must deal.

Thus understood, we shall perceive that the Chinese are not inherently different from the rest of mankind. For far less reasons the Greeks looked down upon all peoples as upon barbarians and thought it a virtue to hate unreservedly the foreign nature. So provincials the world over have thought themselves the elect of heaven. Common as all this is, and familiar from countless instances known to ourselves, even among Americans with all our opportunities for knowledge of other localities, in China provincialism has been made racial by the situation of the country and by its wide separation from other favored sections of the globe.

Ten centuries ago China was un-

doubtedly the most civilized portion of the world, and three thousand years ago only Egypt and possibly India could have competed with it. But while the others have changed in various ways, China has remained the same. Think of some of its achievements! The greatest structure ever reared by human hands is the great wall. It is fifteen hundred miles long; without break it crosses valleys, climbs mountains, clambers up the face of precipices, and bounds an empire on the north. It was built before the formation of the Roman Empire, while it was still a republic, and while Christianity was still unborn, in 204 B. C. Or, to take a modern instance, while the enlightened peoples of Europe were still engaged with the Crusades, before gunpowder or the printing-press had been invented, China built the great canal, almost seven hundred years ago.

Our imagination fails us with such numbers. A thousand years of Chinese

history makes no impression upon us, for they stand for no events and are represented to our thought by nothing distinguished in character or literature. But to the scholar all is different. He learns to fill out the centuries and gains at least some faint idea of their magnitude. He comes to understand that it has not been quite a monotonous sameness, but that there have been wise and unwise rulers, successful and inefficient dynasties, periods of refinement with flourishing literature and art and periods of terrible and desolating warfare. In China, too, he comes to understand there have been great sovereigns, great novelists, great essayists, great historians, great artists. To begin to master all that has been there achieved is beyond the powers of any man, and the most that an industrious student can hope to do is to learn more or less thoroughly the events of some single period, or to trace the development of some

particular line of science or of art. Chinese encyclopaedias there are, in hundreds of volumes, and histories which seem interminable, and dictionaries which are terrifying by reason of their size, and compendiums, and short editions innumerable, themselves seemingly long enough for the most industrious.

But leaving this, let us look over the country and note some of its acquired characteristics. First of all perhaps is the kind of cultivation. Man here has developed a form of agriculture which is akin to gardening, minute, thorough, utilizing every spot and space, so that the impression is not of fields and meadows and pastures but of little plots as carefully tended as a flower-box for a window. There are no flocks nor herds nor carriages nor pretty farmhouses. Villages there are innumerable. At a distance they are often attractive, but they will not bear a closer inspection. The streets are

very narrow, seldom over ten feet in width, the houses are low, small and miserable, and there seems a total lack of order, cleanliness and, of course, of elegance. There are no parks nor pleasure-grounds nor attractive suburbs. The village begins and ends suddenly, and is as cramped for space as are the cities. There are no trees nor vines nor (not to dwell too long) comforts without the houses or within. Outside the villages are the garden-like fields, and roads stretching from village to village in all directions. There are great roads, some of them paved, but all of them, like the smaller ways, in horrible repair. This is true also of the streets in the cities. Peking is distinguished for the width of its streets and for their badness. It is said that after a rain pedestrians have perished in them, so deep are the holes and so fathomless the filth, while in dry seasons the dust is almost as terrible.

The traveller in China is repelled by this view even more than by his sojourn in India. He finds the adjective "Asiatic" applicable to both and with derogatory significance. This is perhaps deepened as he remembers the imbecility of the people in their contact with the foreign powers. India has been repeatedly conquered, and China has proved defenceless against a few thousands of men. The same disorder and lack of system and contentment with obsolete methods are found in both war and peace, so that our visitor upon this brief inspection decides that China is grotesque and impossible.

It is not easy to get beyond these surface opinions. It is true there is nothing which corresponds to the caste of India nor to the vast variety of race and religion which makes the problems there seem so intricate. The people of China are remarkably homogeneous. It is true there are differences of race descent among them, but as

immigrants from different nations become in a generation or two indistinguishable in the United States, losing their differences in a common likeness, so it is in China. There, however, the differences in language are great, dialects differing so widely that the natives of one district cannot understand the natives of another; but nevertheless the homogeneity is greater than the diversity, for the written language in all sections is the same, so that all Chinamen study the same books in the same way, write the same styles of letters in the same words, and possess in general the same literary, philosophical and religious ideas. Further, the homogeneity is increased by the lack of hereditary distinctions in rank. There are, it is true, noble families and other families distinguished for centuries in various ways, but these distinctions do not separate their possessors from the people, and confer no privileges. Theoretically, China is the most

democratic of empires, a place where all men are equal. Theoretically, the son of the poorest peasant is on an equality in all respects with the son of the richest man, and as a matter of fact many of the greatest men in China have come from a humble parentage and from poverty. Thus the natural and artificial barriers which isolate in India are wanting.

This constitutes the first great difference between the two: India is essentially aristocratic, while China both theoretically and practically is democratic. Why, then, cannot the foreigner easily and successfully learn more of the people than appears upon the surface? There are reasons enough. One is that the foreigner is often too contemptuous to take the trouble. The view already outlined is sufficient and he abides with it. Another reason is that a real acquaintance requires great perseverance and persistence. It is not only that the language must

be learned,—and this is one of the severest tasks ever set man,—but an intricate system of etiquette and an extended literature and history. It is only the unusually gifted foreigner who can overcome these barriers and enter into real intercourse, as it can be achieved on no easier terms, and therefore the number of foreigners whose opinion is really valuable is very small. We must remember that the Chinaman looks down upon us and esteems us barbarians. Recalling our own contempt for him, remembering his ill-smelling streets, his horrible roads, his comfortless dwellings and his many eccentric ways, that he should look down upon Europeans and Americans seems simply one more absurdity. But after all it is not absurd, though it is undoubtedly mistaken.

Let us take up the two items named, language and etiquette, and try to understand why the foreigner is a barbarian to the Chinaman. First, the

TEMPLE OF HEAVEN, PEKING, WHERE THE EMPEROR WORSHIPS

language: this is the subject of life-long study to the educated man. The little boy begins the endless task. He is taught profound respect for his teacher, and is informed that the great sages, Confucius and Mencius, before whose tablets he bows on entering school, were teachers. His teacher is paid little in money but greatly in respect, and he may punish his stupid scholars at pleasure, though their parents would not think of flogging them. With this early reverence for the teacher is joined a reverence for books, so that not a printed page, or even a scrap with printing upon it, shall be treated with indignity. Thus from the start letters are given supreme place. Nor is this merely rhetorical extravagance.

The boy in school sees every one giving place to scholars and graduates, the presence of a man with a degree in a village giving it distinction. Rich merchants pay large prices

for the honor of a degree, though they know that the fact of its purchase destroys most of its value. Not only is social precedence given to scholarship, but there are legal immunities as well. The man who has passed the Imperial Examinations has rights before the law possessed by none others, and more than this, he only is eligible to any position in the government. Not rank nor riches but scholarship gives what men everywhere covet,—power, precedence, privilege,—and consequently in every village, with rare exceptions, is a school. Rich men hire private tutors for their boys, and everywhere there are signs of the predominance of learning.

It is true the results are not satisfactory from our point of view. The methods of instruction are slow, inefficient and wasteful. Only the brightest succeed, and multitudes of pupils gain nothing from their arduous toil. For example, students are required

to commit an immense amount of literature to memory, spending years on the task, without one word of explanation. As if our primary student should be asked to commit the classics — say Homer and Virgil — from beginning to end without any translation or any explanation of any difficulty. Then, when at last after years the task is ended, all is begun again with translation and commentary, the translation and commentary being likewise committed to memory. Were our students required thus to commit all the Greek and Latin poets, with the classical prose authors in the same languages, to memory, with, in addition, minute comments by standard commentators, and be prepared on examination to begin at any point and write the text with the required commentary, and then to add a poem in the classic style and an essay absolutely correct according to the form and matter of the ancients, they would

have a task comparable to that set the Chinese students.

In consequence, some scholars fail in the initial task; they cannot remain in school long enough to commit their authors: others are "half learned," that is, they know their authors by heart, but do not in the least apprehend the meaning, and above these are all kinds and conditions of acquirements. Thus those who fall out by the way have nothing of real value to show for their expenditure of time and labor. But the Chinese regard all this as natural, for why should not the fit survive in examinations as in nature, and the weak and unfit fall out by the wayside? Besides, there are competent scholars enough, and we need not be anxious to increase their number.

Nor are the results with those who succeed altogether beneficial. In all the long course of study absolute submission to authority is insisted on. As the

teacher is honored next to the parent, as the printed page is regarded with honor, so in still higher degree are the classic books venerated. All the honor which Christians have given to the Bible is lavished upon the Chinese "Sacred Books." In America there are thousands who treat the Bible with scant respect, but in China there is literally none who does not honor the writings of Confucius. Thus a religious sentiment gathers around these books, and they are supposed to contain the fundamental truth of the universe itself and the laws which must govern mankind. He who obeys them is happy, he who disobeys them is a wretch. The welfare of the empire is dependent upon conformity to the teachings, and even nature, sky and earth and sea are affected by man's obedience or disobedience to them. Moreover, all literature — essays, poems, history — is filled with allusions to these sacred writings, and even the common talk of

educated men cannot be understood unless we, like them, are familiar with their whole range.

We can understand now why the ordinary foreigner appears like a barbarian. He knows nothing of these things. Even if he "knows the language" it is only some spoken dialect, and even if he can read the Chinese characters he does not attain to literary excellence. Thus, judged by one standard, the only standard known, he fails abjectly. And the Chinaman does not value our acquirements in the least. He knows nothing of Greek and Latin and Hebrew, nor of modern languages nor modern science; hence a foreigner may be a marvel in all these, and produces no effect at all because he is ignorant of Chinese literature and the Sacred Books.

Let us repeat, this learning is the sign of the gentleman, it constitutes aristocracy, and the foreigner does not possess it. Why, then, should he be ad-

mitted to the society of gentlemen? They do not care for his conversation, nor he for theirs, hence they remain apart. But do none break through the barrier? Some dig through it. A few distinguished foreigners have so far mastered the task that they have been welcome guests with scholars and have met high-placed graduates on an equality. But in the nature of the case the instances are few. Therefore foreign judgments on China are not often of great value. What should we think of men who, travelling through the United States and finding our food unpalatable and our manners disagreeable, should superciliously write about us on such superficial inspection? Or, without knowing our language or reading a word of the Bible or Shakespeare or of any of our authors, and without meeting any of our leading citizens, because our country roads are undeniably bad, our railway cars overheated in winter, our habit

of public expectoration disgusting, should condemn us and all our ways? On a par with such judgments are our own when we despise this vast people, so large a fraction of the human race, because they do not conform to our standards nor come up to our modern requirements.

But if the whole literary training of the Chinaman secludes him from foreign friendship, so does his etiquette. Probably with all the world etiquette has more influence than morals in determining likings. The etiquette is on the surface so that every one must be affected by it, and if one violates the code in which we are trained he is a boor to us. Now the Chinaman is trained in etiquette as he is trained in letters. Confucius put propriety among the first virtues, and indeed it is a moral accomplishment to say and do the right thing at the right time. But with Chinese minuteness and Chinese patience and Chinese re-

gard for tradition a system has grown up which excels all competitors for intricacy. The Chinese child is trained to it from infancy and it becomes a second nature, so that the humblest does not violate ordinary rules of politeness, while the scholar is as proficient in etiquette as in literature. How, then, shall a foreigner become a friend? He does not know how to enter a room nor how to leave it; he does not understand how to drink his tea nor what is the meaning of the cup given him as he begins his call; he does not so much as know when he is grossly insulted, and he insults his host in flagrant fashion, in all unconsciousness. It is as if some guest should come to an elaborate dinner given by one of us in his behalf and should put his muddy feet on the dining table, sitting with his hat on and his coat off. We would not invite him a second time, nor will the Chinaman, as he finds his foreign guest lacking in the first rudiments of

propriety. So again the Chinaman is justified, at least to this extent, that we can understand his conduct and recognize that his treatment of us is not essentially different from our conduct in like circumstances.

It is difficult to show how minute and all-embracing the rules of conduct are. For example, there is the well-known story of the American who was employed in the University of Japan in the old days when Chinese etiquette was still maintained in that empire. After a time he was visited by a solemn delegation of the authorities, who, after much circumlocution, asked him what they had done to injure his feelings. He replied that they had done nothing, but they took his reply only as polite evasion, and insisted. As really his feelings had not been hurt by anything, he was in perplexity and began at last to ask them what he had done to indicate his annoyance, whereupon it came out that he had appeared (be-

ing really a man somewhat absent-minded and indifferent to his dress) several times in his recitation-room with his shoe-strings unfastened, and the authorities had supposed this a quiet way of indicating that his feelings were injured. Or, to take an opposite instance: an American long years since went to China as a missionary. He took up his residence with a group of students, and learned at once the language and native customs. Many years after he rendered the Chinese government signal service and was made a mandarin. When I knew him he lived in Japan, and he told me that in his long residence in China he had met only courtesy, because versed in their ways he rendered courtesy where courtesy was due. When a new Chinese minister came to Tokyo the American would call upon him. At the outer gate he sent in his ordinary American visiting-card. The response came back, "His Excellency is not at home." So

the American advanced to the inner gate and presented an elaborate visiting-card in Chinese, and again the response came, "Not at home." Then he advanced to the door of the residence and presented his great official visiting-card inscribed with all his titles, and the minister was found at home and prepared to do him all honor. To have presented his official card in the first instance would have been presumptuous. He must appear in a private and modest capacity, but for the minister to have received him in such form would have been to do him a discourtesy. The successive responses were really in the nature of a command to come up higher and be received in a style befitting my friend's rank and distinguished services. Naturally, few foreigners have the time, the patience or the adaptability to learn so elaborate a code and one so adapted to all the contingencies of a strange life. Etiquette in China is little less elaborate

and perplexing than is religious rite in India. In both we have illustrations of the methods in which men bind themselves with artificial codes and make life burdensome by their own traditions. However, there comes a time when even such a code becomes a second nature, and its lack is felt as if something essential were missing.

So again we have found that first appearances are deceitful. China looked to us systemless, untidy, without elegance and repulsive, but already we have gained a certain respect for the people. It is a great accomplishment to make scholarship supreme and to honor letters beyond rank or wealth, and this not by a class of students but literally by all the people—by merchants, officials and even coolies no less than by students and authors. Then, too, it is no mean accomplishment to get a code of etiquette recognized everywhere so that every one may know the right thing to do and

say at the right time. Such a people surely do not merit contempt, but on the contrary may rightly lay claim to a high degree of civilization. Nor can we altogether wonder that our Western civilization appears to them not attractive. As the Hindu supposes that Occidentals are given to the comforts of material civilization while he seeks the joys of religion, so the Chinaman fancies that we give first place to wealth and to force, while he honors literature and morals, including etiquette in morals.

Nor has his regard for morality been merely outward. Long before the Christian era a Chinese emperor declared, "The Empire is peace!" and on the whole the declaration is true. Peace is the ideal of the Chinaman, and war an abhorrent interruption of the course of nature, like a typhoon or an earthquake. We must have soldiers, as we must have policemen, but they are not held in distinguished es-

RICE TERRACES, CHINA

teem. A general is by no means the equal of a subordinate civil official, and the latter always and everywhere takes precedence. To be put into the military service, even though with several steps of advancement, is a degradation and a punishment for a member of the civil service. War is a crime, and only because there are criminals must there be soldiers, is the Chinese principle, a principle which surely is nearer Christian teaching than like Christian practice.

War in China has been terrible. For the most part it has been either the savage incursion of barbarian hordes, without mercy or reason, or it has been the outbreak of rebellion when the people have risen in mobs and have killed and slain without discrimination or limit. Hence in both instances war appears as a species of insanity, as indeed it is. Whereas the Chinaman loves peace, when he is stirred to war he is at once savagely

cruel and an arrant coward. In a mob, with some village or town at his mercy, he will commit deeds of the most horrible description, while as an individual, or on occasions when heroism is required, he proves lacking in courage. This, however, is in part at least because of his training. It is said that when the French attacked the Chinese fleet at Foochow in 1884, the Chinese commander remembered that he had an invitation to dinner on shore and left his ship to keep his engagement. On the other hand, General Gordon (the famous "Chinese" Gordon), commander of the "ever victorious army," declared that the Chinese needed only good leaders and they would be excellent soldiers, an opinion borne out by the testimony of many competent observers. But however that may be, an empire has claims upon our admiration which for three thousand years has honored peace and has given war its true place as an alien element to be

banished from the thoughts and the lives of reasonable men.

Again, we shall not permit our first view of China to blind us to another admirable quality in the people, their persistent industry. We sometimes hear of the birth, youth, maturity and old age of nations. But here is a people which was born before history began, and is still in full virility. As we have noted, they built the great wall two thousand years ago, and they are still capable of prolonged and persistent exertion and of the greatest enterprises; indeed, under competent direction, there is nothing which they may not attempt. All China is filled with patient industry. Beggars there are, as everywhere, but idleness is not held in honor. It is not exalted in virtue into holiness as with the ascetics of India, for the practical ideal of China is plodding, continuous toil. Much of it is misdirected, it is true. As in India, conservatism has hindered

improvements and has added terrible burdens to the task of gaining a livelihood. Almost everything is done at the hardest, for man has only his unassisted strength, using cattle sparingly, and is not master yet of steam and electricity. His toil procures for him the simplest of livings, but therewith he is content, loving his home, his family, his neighborhood, and taking his lot as it is given him. With him too, as with the natives of India, the universe is a vast complex organism, and he is an infinitesimal portion of it. He must move with its currents, and where he is there shall he abide.

Have we not modified somewhat our judgment? This untidy, inelegant, comfortless land is not so uninviting after all, unless we be indeed barbarians and put material satisfaction as first and last the only essential. A people which honors literature and morals and lives under an elaborate code of etiquette, which glorifies peace and

despises war, which rejoices in industry and is content with its lot, must merit something better than contempt or an amused smile at their strangeness. "Why," once asked the distinguished Professor Tholock of an American student, "did the Lord make so many Chinamen and so few Germans?" I do not know what answer was given, but the truth doubtless is because He wanted them. They too have their place on the earth, which does not belong to Germans nor to Americans, and their claims upon esteem and admiration and respect. They too are near our Father, and are His children with their inheritance in His love and favor.

VI
China, its Spirit and Problems

VI

China, its Spirit and Problems

THE Chinese social organism is at once the most primitive and the most democratic in civilized states. Yet its democracy is not according to our type. Our system is based upon the value of the individual, but the Chinese unit is the family. This modifies the whole structure. With us, when a man attains maturity he establishes, if he will, an independent household, or if he will he continues single. In China he does neither the one nor the other, for marriage is not a matter of his will but is arranged for him. Very likely he was betrothed in infancy or early childhood, and although the Hindu system of early marriages does not exist in China, long before the boy is his own master he may have a wife. Indeed he is never his own master, for he is born into a network of relations,

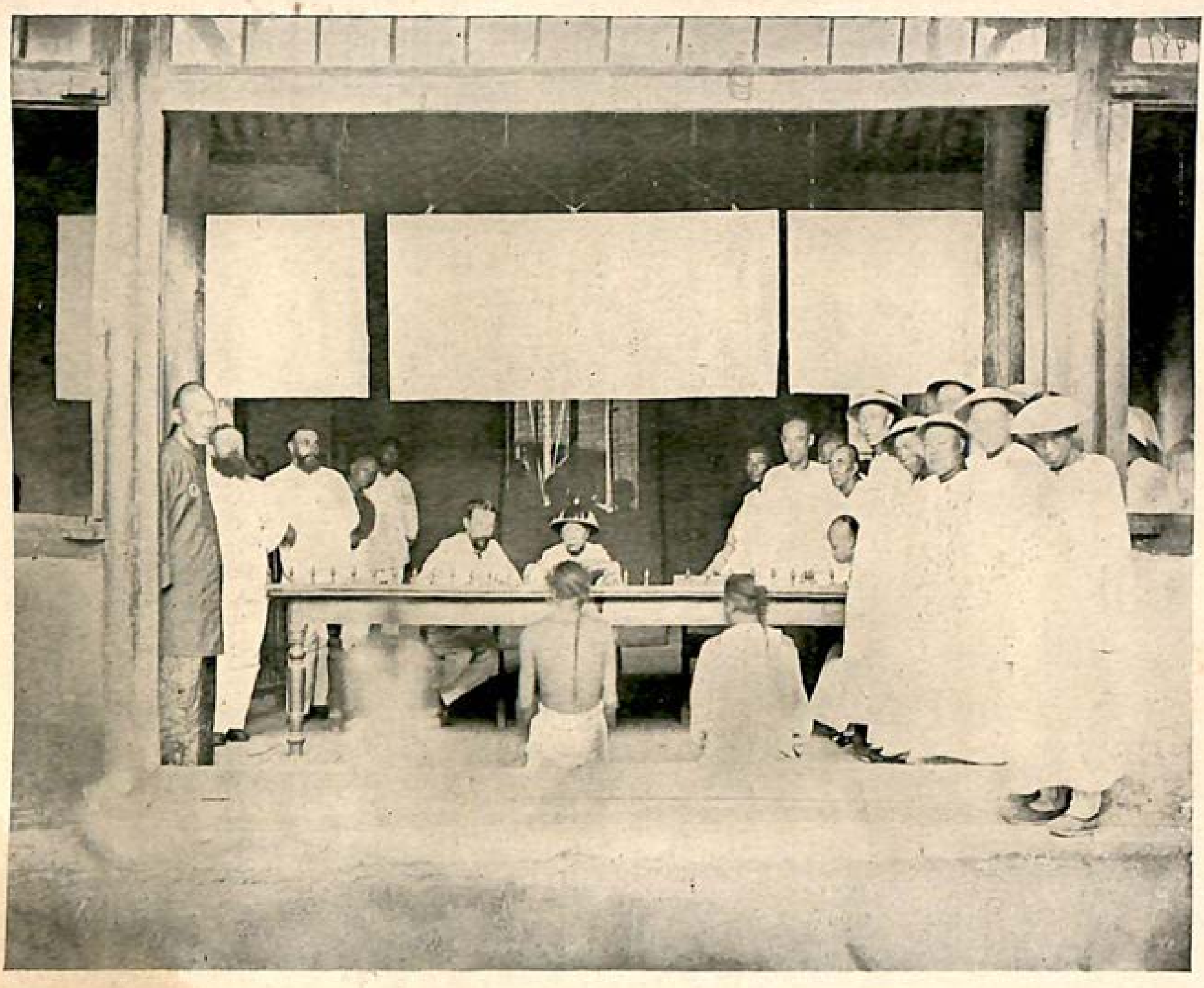
and continues in them all his days. When he marries he brings his wife home, or rather she is brought to him, to his father's house, where she becomes a kind of servant to his mother. The bride's relation to her mother-in-law is far more important to her than is her relationship to her husband, for her subjection continues so long as his mother lives, and she comes to a place of importance only when at last her son brings a daughter home. After a time the family comes to constitute a kind of clan, and the home grows into a village, so that there are very many villages where all the inhabitants have the same family name. When the immediate family connection has so broadened that the sense of kindred is lost, the village remembers still its origin and remains a little self-governing state.

The father of a family has very large powers and very large responsibilities. As the family is the unit, when

one member suffers all suffer with it. If one commits a crime, the entire family may be punished, and even if the actual culprit escape, his parents will suffer in his stead, while if he is caught, they too may be punished with him, according to the gravity of the offence. We must go back to the stories in the Pentateuch and in Joshua for familiar descriptions of a similar state of things. As the family thus suffers with all its members, so does it share in the prosperity of each. No one is rich for himself. If, for example, a son gains the coveted degree which admits him to the public service, and obtains in time a lucrative post, a swarm of relatives will follow him and surround him. He must provide for them all, making nepotism a matter of course. Nor does he ever become precisely his own master, even though he grow to be the head of the family, for he is still bound by custom and tradition and public opinion. These com-

bine to form a force which can be defied only by the boldest and the most strong-willed. Especially must the son honor his parents. This is the central commandment, and it is enforced by endless stories of obedient sons, some of which would seem to indicate, mistakenly however, that the Chinese have no sense of humor. For example, it is gravely related of one good boy that he still dressed in baby clothes when a grown man, and when asked the reason for his course replied that he could not think of dressing like a man lest he should cause his parents to grieve over their advancing years! In many places memorials are set up by the authorities in honor of a son or a daughter who has been an example of "great filial obedience."

Next to these duties to one's parents, which exceed all others in importance, come one's duties to his brothers, and then to his wife, and finally to his friends. But the wife occupies in the



A MIXED COURT, CHINESE AND EUROPEANS, AT SHANGHAI

code a subordinate position, and she has any real position only as the mother of the children who are to continue the family line. For the extinction of the family is a calamity of the greatest magnitude, since in it the Chinaman lives and moves and has his being. He who is cut off from it is an outcaste and a vagabond. There is no new circle which he can enter, since all are constructed on the same plan and have no opening for strangers and foreigners, save possibly as infrequent guests. The economical position is none the less serious for the man without a home: all occupations are filled, and there are no vacancies. The Chinese are past masters in the art of combination, so that our labor unions seem very amateurish in comparison. Thus so long as a man moves along with the system all is well, but woe to him if he steps out.

Then, in addition, all the associations which hallow life are concentrated

about the family. It is thought of as a corporate whole to which belong not only the living but the dead, and these are so connected that the suffering or the welfare of the living affects the dead, and if one break the family line all the ancestors are in distress. To worship or do reverence before the ancestral tablet is far more than all other religion, so that the man who has separated from his family has lost his gods as well as his living relatives.

A young man once came to my house in Tokyo in great grief. He had been for years in New York, where he had prospered until at last he could return to his home in the neighborhood of Canton. He had become a Christian, but as soon as he entered his mother's house she took him to the ancestral tablets and asked him to worship them. He refused, and she in wrath and horror drove him from her door. It was almost night, but not a person in the village would take him in or give him

a mouthful of food, and he was obliged to go many miles to a village where his people were wholly unknown, before he could find a refuge. When I saw him he was on his return to America, since residence in China had become impossible for him.

The Chinaman, therefore, is not naturally an emigrant. All his ties and affections keep him in the locality where he was born. He knows nothing and cares nothing for the world beyond. He does not wish to travel through China and still less to foreign lands. It is only stern necessity which drives so many thousands to expatriate themselves, and this is only for a time and with the fixed resolve to return home when circumstances shall favor them.

In the villages the elders rule. They may be in fact the old men, or they may be young men of vigor and enterprise. Sometimes they are elected, and sometimes they simply take the offices. A multitude of affairs come be-

fore them, for the community is only a larger family and it settles its own matters. It is only when a feud breaks out between adjacent villages, or when in the community matters become uncontrollable, that the officers of the law are called in. But so long as there are no riots, and the taxes are paid with reasonable promptness, the Imperial Government has nothing to do in the premises. It is therefore looked upon as a last resort, and with reason, for when a matter is referred to the courts for settlement it is in desperation, when the appellant is ready for ruin, since in all probability, whatever the rights, both parties will be stripped of their possessions and punished.

It follows that there is nothing like loyalty. Again and again invading armies have been astonished at the readiness of the people to serve them. If the pay were good and prompt the people showed a strange impartiality. They have no patriotism for China and no

affection for the Emperor, who is as a god far away in Peking, inaccessible and unimaginable. During the recent wars missionaries have reported the total lack of interest in the news, the peasant not caring who fought or who won, so long as the conflict was at a distance from his fields.

If we, however, were to live in the capital, the government would assume high importance, or if we were educated and had passed our examinations. Without legislature or supreme court the power centres in the Emperor, but he is not an autocrat, for he must rule according to precedent and, above all, in accordance with the code handed down from antiquity under the name of Confucius. The theory is that he rules by his virtue, standing as representative of the people before Heaven and responsible to it. Nor is he above human censure, since there are specially appointed officials whose duty it is to reprimand him when he

wanders from the straight and narrow way. Difficult as is this duty, it has been faithfully performed times innumerable by upright and truth-loving men. I quote from "The Middle Kingdom:"

"The celebrated Sung, who was appointed commissioner to accompany Lord Macartney, once remonstrated with the Emperor Kiaking upon his attachment to play-actors and to strong drink, which degraded him in the eyes of his people and incapacitated him from performing his duties. The Emperor, highly irritated, called him to his presence, and on his confessing to the authorship of the memorial, asked him what punishment he deserved. He answered, 'Quartering.' He was told to select some other: 'Let me be beheaded;' and on a third command, he chose to be strangled. He was then ordered to retire, and the next day the Emperor appointed him governor in Ili, thus acknowledging his rectitude,

though unable to bear his censure."

The story illustrates the old Chinese saying, "The position of the Censor is more dangerous than is that of the foremost spearman in battle." The Emperor sometimes publicly assumes responsibility for the evils in his dominion, in accordance with the word of Confucius, "If you hear of evil examine self."

Below the Emperor are the great departments of state,—the Cabinet, the General Council of State, the Board of Civil Office, the Board of Punishments, the Board of Works, the Colonial Office, the Censorate, the Court of Transmission (a means of communication with provincial authorities), the Court of Judicature and Revision, and the Imperial Academy. These various bodies are intrusted with the control of a great body of officials, and through them with the entire empire. But all must rule in accordance with the great code which is supposed to cover all

contingencies. It is in six sections: general, fiscal, ritual, military, criminal and Public Works. It is described as "on the whole reasonable and common sense, though not indicating a very high social development." It fits the conditions of the people, and the result is that there is little discontent and no thought of reformation or revolution. The system is as the laws of nature, and the people do not complain of it. The only dissatisfaction is with the officials and their fashion of enforcement of the laws.

Doubtless there are thousands of honest officials, and they must not be judged by our standards, for "graft" is a part of the system. So it is in all departments of life. The new-comer from America perhaps rebels. He will not submit to a system where there are not only tips constantly but where every one takes a "squeeze," everything which he buys paying its per-

centage to his household. But by and by he recognizes his powerlessness. Even if he make his purchases himself, his servants take toll when they are delivered at his door, and even if he carry them home, in one way or another the place of purchase is discovered, and the seller hands over the commission. With such a system pervading life it is not wonderful that official circles make all that the "business will bear." The governor of a province is paid a salary which is absurdly small, not more perhaps than he pays his cook, and yet after a few years he retires rich, and besides, has made the fortune of a multitude of relations. All this within a degree is looked upon as a matter of course, and it is only when the graft becomes unusually large, so that there is an increase in the burdens of the people, that there is trouble. The patience of the common people is very great, but it has its limits. As in private affairs

there comes a time when an individual is ready to be ruined himself if only he may injure his adversary and so goes to law, there is also a time when the people throw all patience and caution and prudence to the winds and rise in frantic mobs to protest against misgovernment, and then beware! The Chinaman is the most matter-of-fact, practical, phlegmatic of individuals, until he explodes, and then he seems crazed, irresponsible, cruel, dangerous, ready to go all lengths and to destroy himself with his enemies. Rightfully, considering the character of the people, the governors are required to maintain order, it being taken for granted that they are to blame if disorder arises. This too is in accord with the Confucian teaching, which supposes that if the rulers are virtuous the people will be not only happy but good, and hence that if the people are rebellious the rulers must be to blame. Nor am I aware that the teaching has

A CHINESE FUNERAL PROCESSION

been disproved by facts in the long course of Chinese history.

The social morality is equal to that of Europe. It is true that the idea of the family is different. A man may have not only a wife but concubines, and in some instances, if, for example, his wife has no children, he must have them. But if we condemn this as immoral we must also condemn Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to say nothing of David and Solomon. It is another social organism, accepted and maintained with all propriety. Indeed, as we have seen, the Chinese are beyond all others sticklers for propriety. They regard us as immoral because men and women meet freely and even are seen on the street together, whereas Chinese etiquette forbids brothers and sisters to so much as touch hands after an early age.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of Chinese life, next to its industry, is its monotony and vacuity. Years

ago I met a very wealthy Chinaman on a steamer going from Hong-Kong to Penang, where was his home. He was a mandarin, having purchased his degree as he told me without hesitation, and was consul in Penang. He had been making his yearly visit to his parents in Canton. I asked why he did not return to Canton and make it his permanent home. He replied, "I cannot afford to," and upon an expression of astonishment he went on: "All the officials know that I am rich, and if I were to return I should be obliged to give most of my wealth to them. Were I to refuse they would arrest me on any charge, and I could not escape from prison without satisfying their demands. You know that the Chinese call the prison 'Hell,' and it deserves the name. Besides, in Canton there is nothing to do. In Penang I keep my carriage and drive every day, I have my club and all I wish in the way of amusement. In Canton

there is nothing which attracts me." His story illustrates at once the way of the officials and the dulness of life. If he could find nothing to do, still less can the common people find amusement.

Their lives of toil have few pleasures; theatres, story-telling, Punch and Judy shows, weddings, funerals, feasts, the fortnight holiday at New Year's, about exhaust the list. And these are infrequent and uncertain save the last. Then the whole empire makes holiday. All debts are supposed to be paid by the end of the previous twelfth-month, or if not paid, escaped for another year (though a story is told of one creditor who sought his debtor in broad daylight on New Year's Day with the light of a lantern, thus keeping up the fiction that it was the night before, as our congressmen turn back the hands of the clock to lengthen, like Joshuas, the length of the natural day). So with free minds the people give themselves over to pleasure, es-

pecially to feasting and to gambling. The latter is the national vice, recognized as such, but at this festive season even the most virtuous women indulge themselves in its excitement. But for the most part it is on the smallest scale, for the people are very poor. There are thousands, tens of thousands of families whose total possessions are not worth five dollars each, and multitudes more who do not know whence the next meal is to come. Almost in desperation, the distinction between mine and thine is effaced, and the people who are in possession are obliged to watch their crops, their fruit, their food in their larders, all that they have with constant care.

With monotony and poverty combined, human life has little value even for its owner. One is tempted to think the Chinese made of a special nervous, or nerveless, tissue. Certain it is that all the discomfort of their villages and homes does not annoy them, nor are

they ambitious of anything better. Foreign surgeons perform operations upon them without anaesthetics which no Occidental could so endure. A missionary friend illustrated from his experience the curious insensibility to discomfort. Returning half sick from a trip in the interior he put up in the village inn, a series of cells surrounding a courtyard. No sooner was he settled in his place than in came a man with a donkey and stopped just outside his room; and soon a second and a third and a fourth, then men with other beasts, all tired and excited and noisy, but not a Chinaman protested or indeed cared. Not until after midnight did the hubbub subside, and then shortly, long before dawn, a man came with a number of hogs and proceeded to brand them one by one! Only a foreigner with high-strung nerves would object to such a resting-place.

Even the Japanese are astonished at the Chinese lack of nerves. A spy was

taken early in the war, a Chinaman, and was condemned to be beheaded. He listened to the sentence with stolid composure, and asked for something to eat on his way to the execution ground. He was given a rice-ball wrapped in a leaf, and he ate the food with keen relish, taking the pains at last to pick off the kernels which adhered to the leaf. Then he threw away the leaf and bowed his head to the executioner's sword.

Or take another instance. In a typhoon the Chinese stokers on a steamer quit work and threw themselves on the floor. Neither curses, kicks nor blows could induce them to stir from their places. Finally the chief officer drew his revolver and threatened to shoot if they did not return to work. They still refused, and he shot one of them, and threatened to shoot again. They still refused to work and he shot again. But still they refused to work, and he put up his pistol, re-

cognizing the impossibility of arousing them. They fully expected the loss of the ship, and why should they spend the last hour of life at work, or what did it matter whether they went down with the boat or were killed by the chief officer? The cabin passengers stoked the furnaces and saved the ship.

But though the Chinaman is thus disregardful of life, though many can be found who will give their lives for a few dollars or out of revenge, yet no people are so mindful of the body after death or so clear in mind as to the future state. They provide the departed spirit with an elaborate outfit, furniture and clothes, and even deeds of property, all of paper, all to be burned, and all of value in the spirit world. The body is prepared with elaborate care, and buried in ground which is henceforth sacred.

With all his practicality, the Chinaman is intensely religious, or perhaps

as the King James version mistranslates St. Paul's word, "superstitious." There are three great religions, and a Chinaman may believe any or all or, most likely, some composite of the three. Two are native and one imported. The last is Buddhism. It was made the state religion in the first century of the Christian era, and for a thousand years influenced profoundly the empire. Emperors abdicated and became monks; great nobles founded monasteries, becoming abbots; great ladies entered convents; literature and philosophy were shaped by the Indian teaching. But after the thousand years had passed educated men rejected the religion and returned to the teaching of Confucius, leaving Buddhism for the ignorant and the lowly. Nowadays it is still in this evil fortune, compounded with a variety of native superstitions and incapable of high influence. Its priests are ignorant and degraded, and its true followers few. The attitude

of the gentry towards it is well illustrated by an address given by a high official some years ago at the dedication of a Buddhist temple. He told the people that he came because he had been earnestly invited to make the chief address; that of course he did not believe in any of these things; that he had no doubt Buddhism was of some interest and value for the lower classes; and, finally, that possibly there might be some truth in some of its teachings! No one seemed shocked or even surprised at so strange an address of dedication, for it expressed what every one knew to be the facts.

Besides Buddhism is Taoism. It was originally a mysticism, but is now simply a mass of miscellaneous superstitions, with priests who act as necromancers and quellers of evil spirits. They cast the horologue for infants, choose lucky days for enterprises, and determine what is the relationship of the position of houses to good and bad

luck. Most potent of all the influences which determine man's destiny are those of air and earth (Feng-Shui the Chinese call them), and the necromancer must always be consulted in order that evil may be ordered or avoided and good invited. The topic would take a volume by itself.

The ordinary citizen cares little for distinctions between these systems, and knows little of their teachings. He follows custom and tradition, and frequents the village temple, and employs the priest as he binds his daughter's feet, and conforms to the fashions in his dress. The government has no state church, but it governs religion as it governs all else. The officials are superior not only to the priests but to the gods, so that one may read in the Peking "Gazette," the official publication of the government, of the exaltation or the degradation of some local deity precisely as of the promotion or punishment of a human official.

The religion of the official is Confucianism, and this is the true religion of China. As in India so in China, religion is like a transcript of the people, it reveals in clearest light the spirit of the empire. Confucianism has been described as chiefly polity, that is, for the government of the statesman. In fact it is intended first of all for him, and sets forth the ideal which is to be his guide. It is lofty, rational, attainable, and, as things go, effective. It makes righteousness the very essence of the ruler. If a man be not righteous he is no ruler, and a king is rightfully dethroned if he transgress the law. As with the ruler so with all men, righteousness is first, indeed it forms man's true nature. Elsewhere only by the Jewish prophets has the rule of right conduct been so exalted and righteousness made so supreme. In empire, in community, in family, in one's own soul, righteousness is to reign. Or we may reverse the order.

One is first of all to govern himself according to righteousness, then his family, then the community, and then the empire. Righteousness is the law not only of mankind but of the material universe as well. All is law, and all is according to one great system. In it everything has its place, and in its place finds its reason for its being. That is, the Emperor is not Emperor in order that he may enjoy wealth and pleasure and power. He is Emperor for the sake of the people. As it is written, "The Empire is the Empire of the Empire. It is not the Empire of one man." So with the father, he is father not for his pleasure but for the sake of his family; and so with the son, his existence is not for himself but for his parents' sake. Nor are these relationships merely of human contrivance, they are natural, the expression of heaven's eternal law. Heaven is expressed in righteousness and truth, for it is not the blue vault above us,

A CEMETERY NEAR FOOCHOW, SHOWING OMEGA SHAPED GRAVES

but is the eternal and unchanging power which watches over us and makes for righteousness. Thus Confucianism begins with the concrete relationships of our lives, and it ends with a religious acknowledgment of an invisible Power which is from everlasting to everlasting. But such a system is too refined for the ordinary man. Confucius himself said, "Heaven is too cold and heartless, therefore the common people turn to gods and spirits."

The contrast between India and China comes out most clearly in their religions. In India the highest holiness is expressed by flight from the world and is found in the ascetic and the recluse. In China such a retreat from the responsibilities of life is the act of a madman, for man's true place is found precisely in the activities of life and in being true to one's family, friends and government. Hence Buddhism is repudiated in the name of a

higher morality, or it is accepted as a system of rites and ceremonies, while Confucianism is maintained as the social and ethical code for conduct.

As one thinks of Confucianism, its vast antiquity, its immense influence over such multitudes, its practical common sense, its freedom from all that is superstitious or licentious or cruel or priestly, of the intelligent men it has led to high views of righteousness, one cannot but regard it as a revelation from the God of truth and righteousness, and as one of the main reasons which account for the long continued peace, prosperity and morality of the remarkable people who produced it.

If now after this hasty and inadequate review we ask ourselves what are the great problems which face China, we find ourselves confronted by difficulties nowhere surpassed. First of all is the physical situation. What shall be done with a country

where poverty is so prevalent? Shall we develop the resources of the country, introduce scientific methods of agriculture, build factories and railways, and in general transform industry? But meanwhile what of the myriads who shall find themselves without employment, displaced by railway and factory and machinery? Our political economy teaches that progress is always at the expense of many, and the gain is worth the inevitable cost. But in China the cost would be so inevitable and so tremendous that one would hesitate to give the order were he possessed of omnipotent command. Will future gain balance present misery, or has one the right to doom the present generation to suffering for the sake of those that shall come hereafter? However, the question is not altogether one-sided nor theoretical. The people now suffer, as we have seen. The population presses upon the resources, and millions are in dire poverty, with famine

and pestilence always present possibilities. Only if we are to sit down helpless before fate can we take the view that nothing must be done because of the displacement of labor. It would seem as if the new era had come to China almost too late, but none the less we are convinced that only as man utilizes the forces of nature, only as he learns its laws and applies them, can there be escape from misery, and this is as true in China as in America.

The same holds in all departments of life. China has a splendid belief in nature and in obedience to its laws. But it confounds nature's laws with the contents of the sacred books. One would not disturb the confidence in nature, but China must replace its useless learning, its poetical and literary accomplishments, by the knowledge of facts. The empire has the defects of its qualities. Its veneration, its propriety, its sobriety, all bind and fet-

ter it because it lacks the freedom of the spirit and is bound fast by the letter. None gives higher respect to Confucius than do I. But how shall any code framed in the remote past meet the changing conditions of human development, or fail to fetter man when it is taken as unchanging law? With little that needs to be repudiated or cast aside, China should add to its stores of learning the new science in all its branches, and be prepared to live not in the twelfth century B.C. but in the twentieth century A.D.

With these changes should come the reformation of its government. It does not need a revolution or the overthrow of existing institutions. The present ones will suffice if efficiently administered. And how shall this be accomplished? How shall knowledge be substituted for pedantry, honesty for corruption, clear-sighted intelligence for obstructive conservatism? How, in short, shall China be led forth into the

currents of the twentieth century and be made participant in the progress of the world?

Let us repeat, "the good is ever the enemy of the best." And it is because China has so long possessed the "good" that it is the inveterate enemy of the "best." Nowhere else is prejudice stronger, nowhere else are ancient customs which are unfortunate and evil more firmly established. Contact with foreign nations has not broken down the Chinese wall of misunderstandings and antipathy. Neither the friendly meetings of commerce nor the hostile meetings of war, neither the knowledge of the greater wealth and prosperity of the Occident nor the apparition of European armies in Peking itself, has sufficed for China's awakening. But now at last Boxer troubles, Russian aggression, and the startling success of Japan appear to be arousing the giant. What shall be the outcome none can know. It will not be

shown completely in our generation, for he is a fool who attempts to "hustle" China. It can be transformed neither in haste nor by arms. Its development has been too ancient and too slow, its people are too content and too numerous, its institutions are too perfectly fitted to the needs of the people and its classic teachings too completely expressive of their mind, for any attempt at sudden reformation or revolution to succeed. The highest wish one may form is, that slowly, without revolution or haste or cessation, the people be educated to new ideals and to new views of nature and of God, and that thus still on the basis of the old a new may be reared which shall be better than the old and yet possess its splendid virtues.

China's peculiar characteristics are the result of her immemorial seclusion. Her great wall is typical of her intellectual, economic and social barriers. Henceforth isolation is impossible and

undesirable. Not through any sudden irruption of "barbarians" can the traditions of millenniums be overturned, but only by the slow process of peaceful contact. We may hope that electricity and steam and the countless forces of our era which make for international intercourse will affect China at last and bring her into the comity of nations and give to her the best which the West has learned.

VII
Japan, its People and Customs

VII

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THE continent of Asia is fringed upon its east by a long line of islands which stretch from Kamchatka on the north to the equator. More than two thousand miles of this line acknowledge the sovereignty of Japan, the northern limit being farther north than the northern boundary of Maine, and its southern south of the Tropic of Cancer. By the cession of the southern half of Sakhalin to Japan under the terms of the new Russo-Japanese treaty, the northern boundary of the "island empire" will touch a parallel which crosses Labrador. But without this addition the empire now extends through thirty degrees of latitude and thirty-five of longitude. Yet we constantly think of it as a little kingdom, and doubtless Russian statesmen underestimated its size by the habitual

use of maps drawn to different scales, big for the home lands and small for the rest of the world.

Excluding the colonial possessions, the empire itself may be thought of as corresponding to our own Atlantic seaboard, from the northern boundary of Maine to Florida, with an area somewhat more, perhaps a quarter more, than that of Great Britain and Ireland, and a population of about forty-five millions. Hence it is not one of the minor nations, but in size is comparable to France.

Its population is very dense in spots. The land is a great mountain chain rising out of the sea and full of volcanoes. From the central mountainous mass branches run out in various directions to the sea, so that one is almost never out of sight of hills, nor are there any really extensive plains. The mountains are sparsely inhabited and are not inviting for agriculture. Indeed only one tenth of the whole surface is un-

A COAST SCENE, JAPAN

der cultivation, so that a small fraction of the area supports the population, aided, it is true, by the plentiful harvest of the sea.

The mountains came out of the sea, but whence the people came we do not know. Some time in the dim past they came across the narrow straits from Korea, and in various waves of immigration occupied the land. That was before they had either written history or oral tradition, and the memory of their journeys on the continent has long since faded without leaving more than a doubtful trace or two. What we know is chiefly negative. They are not akin to the Chinese nor to any other people on the mainland, except in a remote cousinly fashion to the Koreans. If we may judge from their language, these are their only kin, besides the tribes who live in Loo Choo, now also under Japanese rule.

As we do not know whence the race came, so also we do not know when

they came into their land. Already it was occupied, and for ages the newcomers fought the aborigines (if indeed these were not immigrants themselves and conquerors like the Japanese), until at last the latest comers were in secure possession and at peace. During this same period, however, the Japanese fought among themselves, being divided into clans or tribes or families without any strong central government. Japan is unlike India and China in this: it has not a history of immemorial antiquity, but is a new nation, in age comparable to the nations of Europe. When the Germanic tribes were still semi-barbarous so were the Japanese, for the latter came under the influence of enlightenment only a little before the time of Charlemagne.

Long, then, after the Christian era civilization came to Japan from China, brought by Buddhist priests who came as missionaries not only of civilization but of religion. The earliest trust-

worthy date is 552, and the first book written in Japan, which still remains, was composed in the year 712. Thenceforward the history of the people is clear and carefully written.

Buddhism won its first converts among the highest of the people, emperors and queens and great nobles. There was something of opposition, in part religious on the part of the old native faith, in part political by men who did not fancy the new system of government now introduced. For with Buddhism came all Chinese civilization, the very name by which Japan is called, Nippon; the centralized form of government, with emperor, who in imitation of Chinese usage was called Son of Heaven, and twelve ministries, and an organization of the country into provinces; a new code of laws; letters and literature, mechanics, agriculture, commerce, architecture, art,—all continental and all adopted with fervor. The process was long, from the

middle of the sixth century to the middle of the eighth, but it was accomplished at last, and Japan took on the appearance which it still retains.

Fortunately, the process was permitted to go on to its end without interference. After a few ineffectual uprisings there were no rebellions within, and no foreign foe appeared without. Foreigners indeed were interested in the process, but as friends and advisers and teachers only. They did not plot for supremacy, nor use their position to further political ends, so that they were trusted and given positions of honor. After a time the Japanese visited China and Korea, seeking knowledge at the fountainhead, and came back laden with treasures of information.

The civilization thus introduced was of course Asiatic in all its characteristics, but it was Asiatic civilization at its best. Buddhism as it came to Japan was an organized religion, with tem-

ples and monasteries and a hierarchy. It had a developed theology, a metaphysical philosophy and many sects. Its influence was great, for Japanese religion was completely unformed and undogmatic. In place of its simple nature-worship with its confused mass of superstitions Buddhism brought definite ideas, elaborate rites and a profound belief in education. Schools were started in connection with the temples, and the people were taught the wonders of Asiatic learning.

But with all its excellences Buddhism was thoroughly Asiatic. Its idea of God was profoundly philosophical, so that only the few could understand it, and, therefore, precisely as in India, for the masses there were pious fictions which were "good enough" for them. Then, still more to the detriment of sound ideals, the conception of the religious life was ascetic, or at least religion was synonymous with "flight from the world." Hence the

holy man is not in the world, but hastens out of it, and his task is not its reformation, but the contemplation of the "Ultimate and the Absolute." With such teaching there is always danger that the best of the nation will shun its most pressing tasks, and that the great work of every day will be degraded by the belief that it is not truly religious. Buddhism in Japan was saved in part from these results by its union with Confucianism. For when Buddhism came to Japan it was still in harmony with the rival system in China, the former furnishing the material for the religious life, and the latter the code of morals for the work-aday world. So was it in Japan, and thus the full effects of Buddhism were not felt. Still, as in China, emperors abdicated to enter monasteries, and great nobles became abbots. There was immense activity in temple-building and in religious art and in religious ceremonies and rites. The nation

JAPANESE BUDDHIST PRIESTS, BEGGING

took on a religious aspect which still continues. Notwithstanding this undoubted service in bringing civilization and learning, the predominant characteristic was other-worldliness, for the typical Buddhist is the man who is so impressed with the transitory and worthless character of all things that he comes to think that nothing is of real consequence, so that happiness is not to be sought nor sorrow avoided. Hence the world assumes an unreal aspect and is sorrowful in its best estate. "As sad as a temple bell" is a Japanese proverb, and the impression made by religion is that all strenuous effort is an error, quietness, repose and a placid content being the chief ends of life. In all this Japan belongs to the continent upon whose border it lies.

The civilization which resulted from this contact with China was truly of the Asiatic type. How indeed could it have been otherwise? In the first chap-

ter reference was made to a Turk who objected to life in Paris, his ideal being a mansion and a garden and a group of friends, removed from social functions and great dinners and engagements and note-writing; a place where one could be in luxurious ease and do as he pleased. Such was this early civilization in Japan, refined, aesthetic, luxurious, in retreat from the responsibilities and cares of life, and withal immoral. The emperors were the source of power, but they ceased to rule. The great nobles monopolized the offices of state, but they were too effeminate to attend to their duties. The lesser nobles sent their subordinates to govern the provinces in their name, and gave themselves to pleasure, while over the whole scene religion threw its half-light, the great Buddhistic establishments being under the patronage of the emperor and his princes and as luxurious as palaces. Thither the rulers retired for repose

when the ceremonious life at court became too burdensome. Had all this continued Japan would have become decrepit before reaching maturity.

But this spirit of Oriental luxury is not the spirit of Japan. After a time luxurious peace came to an end. Because of the misrule of the central government rebellion broke out and endless feuds ensued. A feudal system was formed gradually with its barons from the ranks of the soldiery, while the old nobility looked on helplessly, and the emperor lost all his power, becoming a prisoner of state, none the less a prisoner because invested with a quasi-divine dignity. For five hundred years war was the burden of the story. It is a tiresome tale, Asiatic in this, that it involved no great principle, but was merely tribal, individual and local strife. No great constitutional movement came out of it and no high ideal of the worth of man; hence it is not history in the highest sense, for

that is a record not of the doings of man but of his progress.

However, something was accomplished during these centuries. In the earliest times there was no army, but so far as we can judge from our imperfect evidence, the strongest men served as soldiers in the time of need, and if there were troops with local chieftains, they were not distinguished permanently from the masses of the people. But in the feudal wars gradually a military class was formed, the famous samurai. They were the military retainers of the barons, and corresponded roughly to the knights of feudal Europe. Each baron had his castle with its moats and walls. Within the outer walls dwelt the samurai, or sometimes in choice situations in the near vicinity. They constituted the power on which the baron depended, and in them, subject to him, were vested all the state functions. They were the judges and the civil officials as well as the

military force. The baron only was above them, and he was often so effeminate that the knights had all things in their control, so that their interests were varied, and they learned to identify themselves with the state. They in time constituted a caste, and though some of the greatest soldiers Japan has produced came from the common people, and though there is no difference in blood or in fundamental characteristics between the samurai and the rest, yet so strong was the feeling of superiority that a man from the people who by extraordinary means entered this higher class was ostracized, nor could his descendants regard themselves as on an equality until the fourth or fifth generation.

We find, then, in Japan a social organization which was not essentially Asiatic but approximated the scheme of Europe in the feudal ages. First of all were the emperor and the court nobles, with a religious atmosphere about

them, living in retirement without contact with the actual affairs of the empire. Similar instances have been known in Europe; for example, the sluggard kings of France in the seventh and eighth centuries. Then came the feudal barons, in number varying at different times, but say two hundred and fifty in all, men who had seized positions of advantage and had won the power which they handed to their descendants, provided the sword which had won it could preserve it; next were the samurai, the knights, the gentlemen, some four hundred thousand of them, making with their wives and children a total of eighteen hundred thousand; and below these were the common people,—farmers, artisans, merchants and laborers,—with a horde still below the last, beggars and thieves and outcastes. This organization lasted until 1867-9, when the feudal system was overthrown and modern reforms were introduced.

CANAL IN TOKYO

If now we attempt to enter the life of the people we shall find resemblances to and differences from other Asiatic kingdoms. Here was not a peace-loving democracy as in China, nor a caste system based on differences in nationality as in India, but a feudal aristocracy as in Europe. Nor, again, was there, as in China, a notion of self-sufficiency, of being the only civilized nation under heaven, for the people were well aware that their civilization was not indigenous but imported. Nor was there the sense of subjugation which is characteristic of India where wave after wave of foreign conquest has rolled over the land, for Japan has never been conquered by a foreign foe. Thus again we have a consciousness approaching the European type, with its recognition of indebtedness to the ancient civilizations and its proud self-reliance and confidence in its power to work out its own destiny. From such combinations we may look for the greatest

results, not from peoples who have been so isolated that they have acquired an altogether false conception of their own position, nor from peoples who have been so conquered that they have lost self-confidence, but precisely from peoples who, knowing their debt to others, are still confident in their own ability to maintain their independence and to add to the progress of the race.

This consciousness in Japan was differently developed in the differing classes, and yet it was not wholly wanting in any. With all his ceremonial readiness to acknowledge his superiors there was in the common man a certain sturdy self-assertion which commanded respect, for he was by no means ready to submit beyond definite limits, and at times forced the hand of his masters by acts of heroic self-devotion.

The farmers ranked next to the gentlemen, and some of them were men of

importance. The home of a great farmer had the characteristics we found wanting in China,—elegance, neatness, comfort, order, attractiveness. A friend of mine was the son of a farmer who had hundreds of peasants. They were his tenants, paying him half their gross products as rent. They were at his mercy, owning nothing but their little cabins and the ground on which they stood. Were he to refuse one of them the renewal of his lease, it would be ruin. There was no possibility of other employment in the neighborhood, and a peasant could not travel to any other district without a passport. Yet the relationship was not without its alleviations. In hard seasons the landlord reduced the rent or remitted it altogether, and in cases of misfortune he was expected to aid. But he was not free himself. The government exacted a large part of his receipts as land tax, and as he looked down upon his tenants and would not associate with

them, so did the gentlemen look down upon him. At the end of an avenue of fine old trees, and surrounded by a beautiful garden, stood his house, large and well arranged, with articles of art and every indication of refinement. Life had run on in peace and prosperity for generations, the estate being entailed so that it was inherited by the eldest son.

In some of the provinces the tenants had larger rights. In Tosa, for example, the tenant could not be evicted if he paid his rent, nor could the rent be increased, and he could sell his renthold at his will, while all the improvements he had made were his. Thus he was independent. Tosa anticipated the Ulster custom of tenant rights. In this province there were no great farmers, none with a place comparable to that described in the last paragraph, but, on the other hand, none was very poor. They were an independent folk, unceremonious, know-

CAPITOL OF THE HOKKAIDO, AT SAPPORO, NORTH JAPAN

ing their own rights, and ready to defend them, mindful of the feudal wars in which their fathers had taken part, fighting for this baron or for that, and winning the respect of the gentlemen by their bravery.

In the regions near Yedo (Tokyo) the conditions were harder, and the farmers sometimes rose in rebellion, not against the system but against its administration. A story is told of one who sacrificed himself for his neighbors, winning immortal fame. Conditions were unbearable, and the local baron was deaf to all entreaties. So this farmer resolved to lose his life for the welfare of his fellows. He wrote a petition setting forth the wrongs of the farmers, and went to Yedo. There he waited his opportunity, and thrust his petition into the palanquin of the ruler of Japan, the Shogun. This act was punishable with death, for none was permitted to approach the sovereign in such irregular fashion, and

the farmer was taken, handed over to his own master and crucified. But his purpose was accomplished and the people were relieved.

At best the work of the peasant farmer is insufficiently rewarded. He cannot eat the rice he raises, but must sell it and live on cheaper food; his house is small and devoid of furniture and his clothing is of the scantiest. A peasant in Tosa showed me his account for a year, and his total receipts from twelve months of hard work were less than twenty dollars, out of which he had to clothe and feed himself. And the peasant is well off who earns sixty dollars in the year. Hence life is of the simplest. Yet it has its compensations: for example, once in a lifetime a religious pilgrimage, which is a prolonged picnic, to some famous shrine, or a trip to Tokyo and to its temples. Besides there are holidays and rustic festivals and pleasant resorts within easy reach. The peasant

also loves nature and has his tiny garden, and for the winter time a box of plants. His children nowadays go to school, and begin to understand something of the events of the day. For Japan has a well-established system of public schools, based upon our own, and tuition is free to all who apply for it, though a small fee is charged the well-to-do.

From the ranks of the farmers comes a large part of the class foreigners call "coolies." The young men dread the hard and narrow life of the farm, and go to the cities, where they can find employment in pulling the little carriages called jinrikisha. In Tokyo alone more than forty thousand men gain their livelihood by this means. A man may earn a dollar on some days if he be fortunate, or, in private employment, as much as eight dollars a month. Then he has the excitement of his trips, racing with his fellows, and taking long runs as a great pic-

nic. The work is not continuous as on the farm, but is interspersed with rest and amusement. He eats better food and sees more of the world, and so, though he descends a step in the social world, he chooses the pleasanter life. Often it is the more immoral life also, and as he does not take good care of himself, he is worn out before his time. From these men and their fellows, the hereditary coolies, the government has found endless numbers of recruits for its service in Korea and Manchuria,—an unexcelled force for carrying burdens and pulling carts, cheaper and more effective than horses, and as dependable as the soldiers themselves.

The artisans rank next to the farmers. Their work is like that of artisans in all lands, but it is distinguished by its artistic quality. China has produced great artists, and India has magnificent structures in its tombs and palaces and temples; but no other

land can show such a love for the beautiful and such a universal power for its production as can Japan. Italy is its only rival, and art is even more common in Japan than in Italy. Art is not a thing apart, though there are families and guilds of artists, but it is the application of beauty to common articles. So that one finds bits of fine carving in remote country villages, in inns and farm-houses, and forms of roofs and gateways and verandas which please the artistic sense, and utensils of the kitchen and the table which in shape and decoration are worthy of the collector's attention. Even in the prisons are men and women who produce embroidery and carvings and artistic articles in many varieties. Thus art is only the common work done with loving care and with a feeling for the beautiful, and one hesitates to draw the line between artisan and artist.

In the old days the best workers were given a distinguished place, the

product of their labor being taken by great personages, and the workers treated like the retainers of the nobles—that is, given allowances for a lifetime, and expected to produce work not by the piece and for the market but in perfection and with the connoisseur in view. So to-day the choicest work is not done in factories but in tiny shops, the artist being content with his work and seeking only a modest livelihood. The coming of the modern commercial spirit, however, threatens perfection, for it seeks pecuniary reward and as a consequence meets the popular taste and produces by wholesale. Like the farmer and the coolie, the artisan and the artist form hereditary castes, in which the blood descent is less important than skill in the vocation, for often the headship goes not to the eldest son but to an apprentice who excels. He may perhaps marry his master's daughter and become the head of the family, taking

JAPANESE FARMERS

the family name and striving to maintain its reputation.

In such a society trade has a subordinate place, for the ideal is virtue, that is, work for the work's sake and not for gain. Hence mere barter is held in disrepute. The trader is looked upon as is the peddler or the huckster in the West. It is true there have been great families of merchants and houses famous from generation to generation, but generally the trade was on a small scale and dishonest, the very notion of gain being dishonorable. Hence in our modern world the Japanese have acquired an evil repute among merchants. It is not easy to do business with men to whom a contract is not sacred, by whom profit is sought through overreaching and misrepresentation, and with whom trade is a game. A wise buyer of high-priced articles told me that on entering a little shop in search of ivories he never expressed a desire to see them, but talked

of other articles,—bronze, silk or lacquer,—and only after repeated visits, when the shopkeeper produced the ivories of his own accord, would the purchaser so much as look at them, and then only with the protestation that he cared nothing for them, but was ambitious only of other things. Or again, sometimes the price rises as the buyer desires many of a kind, a dozen coming to more than twelve times the price of one, because thus the shop is emptied of its stock and the seller is obliged to take the trouble to replenish it. Or again, it takes reiterated demands to get the article one desires brought forth, the merchant declaring that he does not have it, though his storehouse has an ample supply. For even the merchant does not have the true commercial spirit, but wishes only to live as his father lived and to gain the modest income which suffices for his wants. The combination seems odd,—a readiness to make large and illegal gains

and the lack of enterprise in trade,—but it is something every resident discovers to be a fact. Every ton of coal which enters the house and every quantity of sugar or flour or fruit must be watched or the buyer will find himself defrauded, while the supply of milk is so adulterated that I have known careful housekeepers who demanded that the cow be milked in their presence and the milk put directly into their receptacles.

Servants also form a class by themselves, but they are recruited from all the other classes. Domestic service has no stigma attached to it. In the feudal days much of the personal service was rendered by gentlemen, who were honored by such attentions to their lords. In a feudal society, where status is fixed, there is no danger of overstepping the bounds of propriety, and the servant may be an honored member of the family. So, often, men and women chose to follow their mas-

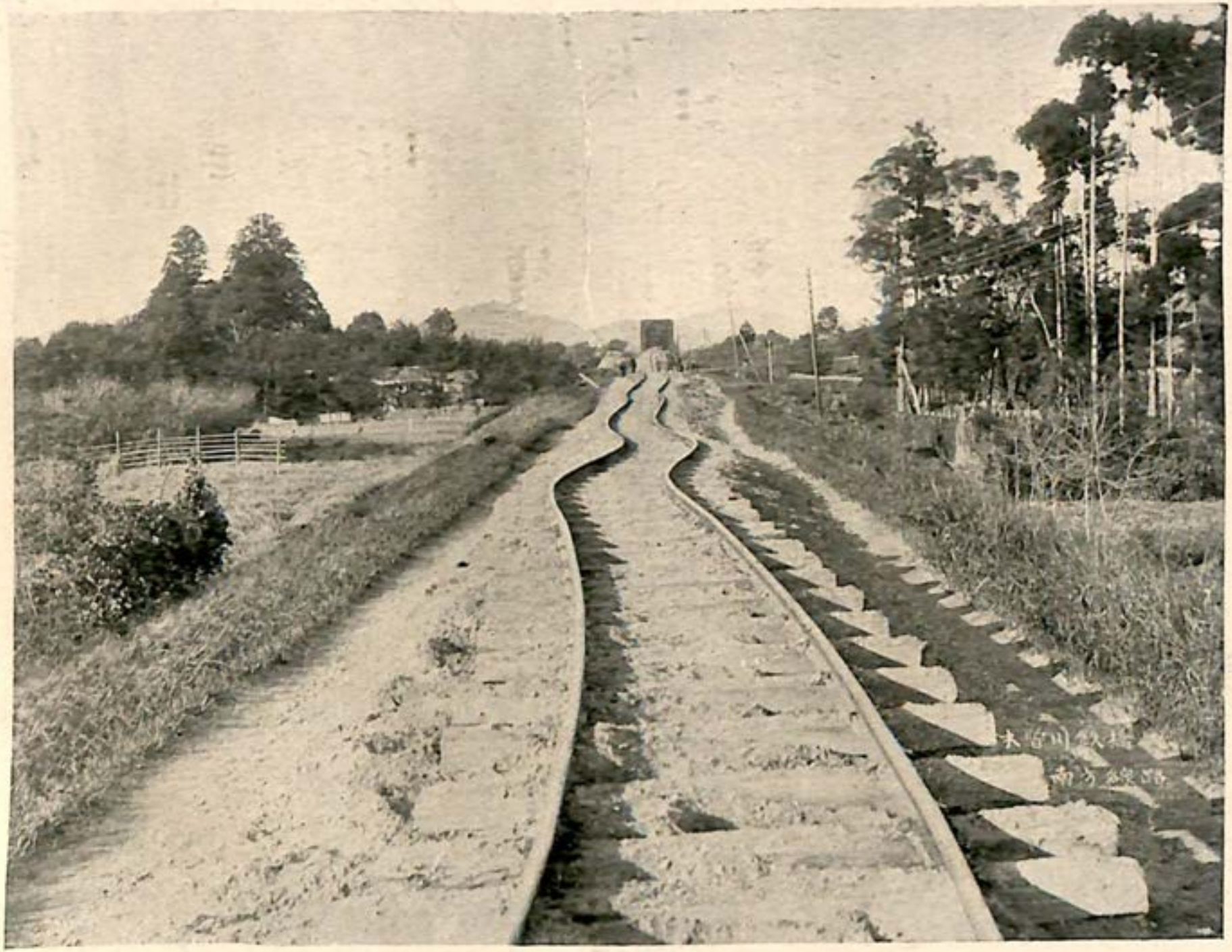
ters, even when in misfortune there could be no wages but only suffering and poverty.

My own cook was a samurai. Once on a steamer I saw him talking to a high official of the government who was going to Germany to purchase guns for the navy. On inquiry I found that the two in the old days had been fellow clansmen, but that my servant had suffered in the changes made by the introduction of modern ways, while his old comrade had profited. My man had charge of all our domestic concerns. No new servant could stay with us against his wishes, and he was always consulted when there was a vacancy. He made the purchases, rendering his account every morning and having his percentage of profit on all. He would run the house without an order for a month at a time, and sometimes when his mistress was absent and I had friends for dinner, he would arrange the menu, buy flowers and

decorate the table, and in general put me entirely at my ease. So, too, in going into the country for a vacation, he would make a list of needed articles, send them off by express, precede us to the cottage in the mountains, put things in order, and greet us on our arrival with dinner prepared and all things in readiness. He was our loyal retainer, and would go forth with us to the ends of the earth. I doubt not he would come to us were we to return to Japan after these years of absence, for we are still his master and mistress. That is the servant at his best; but there are others, untrustworthy, careless, wasteful, drunken, for human nature is the same in Japan as in the United States; it varies with individuals, and one may not generalize from a limited experience.

Japan differs from the continent of Asia in its natural scenery as in the characteristics of its people. Instead of vast plains, great mountain ranges

and mighty rivers there are hills and valleys, with the ever-present sea. No land excels it in picturesqueness, and in none do the people more perfectly fit their land. They love it as their only home, they rejoice in its beauty, and they make their constructions suit its features. Their old legends relate the birth of the islands first, and then the birth of the people. All are alike in their descent and in their divinity. All alike, we may add, share in defects, since nothing is perfect upon earth. The same volcanic force which gave the islands their striking forms still works, making the land quake and tremble. In one earthquake, in 1891, more than ten thousand persons were killed and a hundred thousand houses were destroyed. The same winds from the south which bring clouds of warm moisture and pour their contents upon the hills bring also devastating typhoons which seem to laugh at the labors of men. Nowhere is nature more



PECULIAR EFFECT OF THE EARTHQUAKE, OCTOBER 28, 1891

beautiful, nowhere more terrible.

There is something akin to this in the Japanese themselves. No people are more perfectly trained to courtesy. When once I ran over a man in the street with my bicycle he picked himself up and begged my pardon for getting in my way. Nowhere are there greater finish and nicety in workmanship and art. Yet withal there are terrible forces, which when once aroused astonish us by their power. In the next chapter let us attempt to study this character more closely, that we may, in part at least, understand at once the Japanese achievements and the problems which still await their solution.

VIII
Japan, its Spirit and Problems

WRECK OF COTTON FACTORY, NAGOYA, JAPAN, BY THE EARTHQUAKE OF 1891

VIII

Japan, its Spirit and Problems

N the end of the last chapter reference was made to the Japanese tradition. It is not very interesting, and is wanting in the beauty which characterizes the myths of other peoples. But it indicates a belief in the divinity of the land and of its people. Perhaps divinity is too strong a word, as the word in the Japanese means only "superior." So we may amend the sentence to read "in the excellence of the land and of its people."

The world is astonished at the results produced in the last generation. It is only a little over fifty years since Commodore Perry made the first treaty, and it is not yet fifty years since the first American was admitted to the empire as a resident. It was a grudging admission, with the purpose of closing the door completely again af-

ter a little. But that proved an impossibility, and so after many troubles, which we cannot here stop to relate, less than forty years ago the people made up their minds definitely that the policy of seclusion was impossible, and that Japan must come forward and take its place among the great nations of the earth.

Here was a momentous resolution, one unparalleled indeed, and few believed that it could be carried into action. When I went to Japan twenty-eight years ago, in 1877, the movement was well under way. The young men were full of enthusiasm and of undaunted confidence. "When foreigners came to Japan three hundred years ago we were their equals, but we have been asleep, while they have been wide awake. What they have done in three hundred years we must do in thirty." That was the spirit which animated young Japan, and of course all the wise men laughed; they had heard

boys talk before! Very few had confidence in the ability of the people or in their perseverance. "They are first-class copyists," we were told, "and will take on a superficial polish of Western civilization, but they are Asiatics, and between Asiatics and Europeans there is a great gulf fixed." The people did not pay attention to the criticism, but went their way; they engaged foreign instructors,—Americans, Englishmen, Germans, Frenchmen,—and they sent endless delegations to Europe and to America to investigate and to study. It was a great vision of a great world which greeted them, and they recognized its greatness.

What they have accomplished the world knows. The same group of men are still in control, now no longer young, supported in their task by other young men trained by themselves and of like spirit. None now talks about superficial imitation, for the test has

been of the hardest, and every portion of the organization has come forth with glory. The empire has been transformed; what the West accomplished in three hundred years Japan has done in thirty, and the nation takes its place among the world powers.

Here is the greatest of contrasts to India and to China. Europeans have come to think of Asia as an area for exploitation. Any bold soldier with a thousand troops could march through China; and the smallness of England's garrison in India is one of the wonders of the world. The East has lacked power of organization, of attention to detail, of thoroughgoing discipline, of patient working to great and distant ends. It has been absorbed in the contemplation of "the Ultimate and the Absolute," and it has submitted in the present world to more militant races. But Japan has proved itself possessed in high degree of the very qualities which we have regarded as peculiarly

NATIVE METHOD OF SPINNING COTTON, JAPAN

belonging to the Occident.

We have many explanations of the phenomena, but behind them all is this character. There is something in the nature of the Japanese which differentiates them from their fellows. Yet, as already indicated, it is not merely heredity. Put the Chinaman and the Japanese in the same circumstances from childhood, and we doubt if the differences would be great; but the environment has been different and with correspondingly different results.

As we pointed out in the last chapter, the Japanese derived their civilization from the continent, Korea, China and India all contributing to it. In the seventh and eighth centuries of our era the Japanese were as eager to adopt the best as in our own time. They had been semi-barbarous when they became acquainted with a completed civilization, and they set themselves to master it, and in the course of three centuries succeeded. The

higher classes began the work, and from them the new enlightenment spread throughout the nation. The native religion, Shinto, gave place to Buddhism; the old form of semi-tribal government gave way to a centralized empire; the old huts which had done even for the emperor were rebuilt on Chinese models. The law, industry, the whole life, was reformed upon continental models, with Chinamen and Koreans as instructors, and by and by with native Japanese who had visited the Asiatic continent as leaders.

But while thus Chinese civilization was teacher and model, the Japanese were not simply imitators, for how unlike China is Japan in our day, in its houses, its gardens, its customs, its ideals, its ways of life, its social organization! The old civilization was not an indiscriminate adoption; there was no attempt to make Japan a second and an inferior China, but there

was intelligent adoption, and then adaptation. The needs were different, and the organization must fit the needs.

In our own day the same process is going on. Again the Japanese came in contact with a civilization superior to their own. They saw at a glance that they could not compete with the wide-awake, scientific nations of the West if they were to continue on the old lines. As well might junks contend with steamships as the Chinese civilization with modern enlightenment. It was not a question as to which was better in the abstract, but it was the concrete question, What are we going to do about it? There are foreigners who regret the transformation, the old was so unique and so attractive; and indeed if the chief end of the Japanese is to furnish amusement to travellers, then the old was better. But for men of ambition, for a people who wished to play an important part in

the world, there could be no question, and the intelligence of the Japanese is shown by their immediate comprehension of that fact. The Chinese had known Europe for a longer time, but they had not grasped the situation, nor had they yet fully understood it, while meantime the Japanese saw, understood, and set themselves to conquer.

Again, as in the first reformation in the seventh and eighth centuries, it was the higher classes which took the lead. It could not be otherwise. Only the samurai possessed the qualities which make for leadership, and only their intelligence was thoroughly trained. After the feudal wars ceased, say in the year 1600, there ensued a long period of peace. During this time the gentlemen studied the Chinese literature and philosophy. It was severe discipline, but it taught the value of learning and the process of acquiring it. Hence when Japan was opened

again to foreigners there were a large number of trained young men ready for modern learning. They thronged the schools where English was taught, and they visited foreign lands in companies. They did not doubt that what men had learned they could learn, and they wanted the highest and best in mathematics, in philosophy, in science, in the practical arts. Nor were they content with knowledge for themselves. They knew the gulf between the common people and the gentlemen was caused in part by the privileges and in greater part by the education of the latter, so privileges were done away with and provision was made for the education of all the people.

But we may well ask ourselves what was the motive power in all this transformation. Why should a nation go to school with such enthusiasm, and why should men of a special class seek the elevation of the people? The

answer can be found only as we study again the character of the samurai. As we remember, he was the retainer of a baron. He lived the life of a soldier, and his ethics were those of a soldier. His first duty was loyalty. He was told stories of the men of old who gave up all things for the sake of lord and country; he was instructed that his body was not his own but his master's, and that his glory should be in unhesitating obedience and self-sacrifice. He was taught that wealth and luxury might be attained by merchants, but should be despised by samurai. In some of the clans he was separated from home at an early age and put with other youths of his own age that his martial spirit might be fostered and he be brought up as the ward of his clan. Above all he was taught that his own life was not of importance. His education, whether through Buddhism directly or more likely through the Chinese philosophy,

GEISHAS DANCING AT A SHINTO RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL

impressed upon him the shortness of life and the certainty of death, and that whether soon or late was not of consequence. So too with all earthly happiness, it could not long endure, and what we call success is a small matter. What is of consequence is honor, and duty, and, above all, loyalty. The boy was told the story of the national heroes and of his family. On certain anniversaries children were gathered together, and their parents taught them that the spirits of their ancestors were present. Then the story of the family would be related and the boys and girls exhorted to live worthily, so that the honor of the family might be maintained and the spirit of the ancestors be gratified.

With such training there was developed a consciousness of social solidarity and the perception that none liveth to himself. A man's life was in his group, and he identified himself with its prosperity and adversity, so

that men and women did not wish to survive the defeat of their clan or party, but preferred to kill themselves and to perish when all hope was past. So a husband would unhesitatingly sacrifice his home ties for the sake of his feudal lord, and the wife was taught also to put husband and lord ever before herself. Naturally so high an ideal was often violated, for no more in Japan than elsewhere have the ideal and the real been the same. But, nevertheless, a high ideal is a priceless possession. It stimulates heroism, it promotes virtue and it establishes a standard of judgment. There were traitors and self-seekers and disobedient sons and unfaithful servants as in the rest of the world. In periods the ideal seemed to perish and corruption to triumph. Yet the ideal was never wholly lost, nor were there wanting "righteous" men who embodied it.

The ideal itself was not perfect. It

laid too great stress upon the organism and too little upon the individual. Heroism and self-sacrifice would atone for all faults, and a man might live much as he pleased in his personal conduct if as samurai he maintained the standard of knightly devotion. In the story of the "Forty-seven Ronins," the most popular of Japanese tales, the leader, in his desire for vengeance upon the enemy of his lord, debauches himself, drives away his wife, wastes his property, consorts with the lowest men and women, and lives a life of drunkenness and profligacy, all in order that he might throw his enemy off his guard. Successful in this, he slew his foe and then committed hara-kiri, obtaining for himself and comrades the enthusiastic plaudits of the nation. The deed was done early in the eighteenth century, and still the people never weary of the story, and still the graves of the heroes are ornamented with flowers.

These men are called by way of pre-eminence the "righteous samurai." We indeed question the right of a man thus to transgress every rule of private virtue and to debauch himself, but we cannot withhold our praise for such thoroughgoing loyalty.

When Japan came into contact with the Occident loyalty supplied the power needed for its transformation. The alternative presented was, submit to the West as India has submitted or learn from it. With that alternative faced there could be no doubt as to the choice: Japan must be made the peer of the greatest. The passionate patriotism which lies beneath the placid exterior of Oriental politeness forced forward the young men, whose labors and studies were always "for the sake of my country" and never for themselves. In these professions there was more or less hypocrisy doubtless, but it was unconscious for the most part, and

mixed motives were present only as everywhere in this world of mingled good and evil. The patriotism was a living force, and the ideal a guide and a judge.

Early in the movement some of the samurai set themselves to create a national patriotism. It had been the inspiration of a class; it was now to be made the virtue of a people. It was early seen that only a nation which commands the allegiance of all its children could take the place Japan aspired to reach; hence the emperor was made the symbol of the nation, taking the place of the flag with us, and a loyalty to him was cultivated. He responded, giving up a part of his autocratic power, creating a constitution, ruling under it as a constitutional monarch, showing himself in public, looking after the welfare of his people in many ways, and making himself one with them so far as that is possible. He ceased to be a god, and became

the head of his fellow-countrymen. Thus he was more than a mere symbol, for he became an active agent in the transformation of his people.

Great problems remain which require wisdom and perseverance beyond even the tasks of the past. In the comparison it is easy to organize an army and to make over the machinery of the state, but the thorough training of a nation is of supreme difficulty. Let us take up the divisions of activity and set forth their problems.

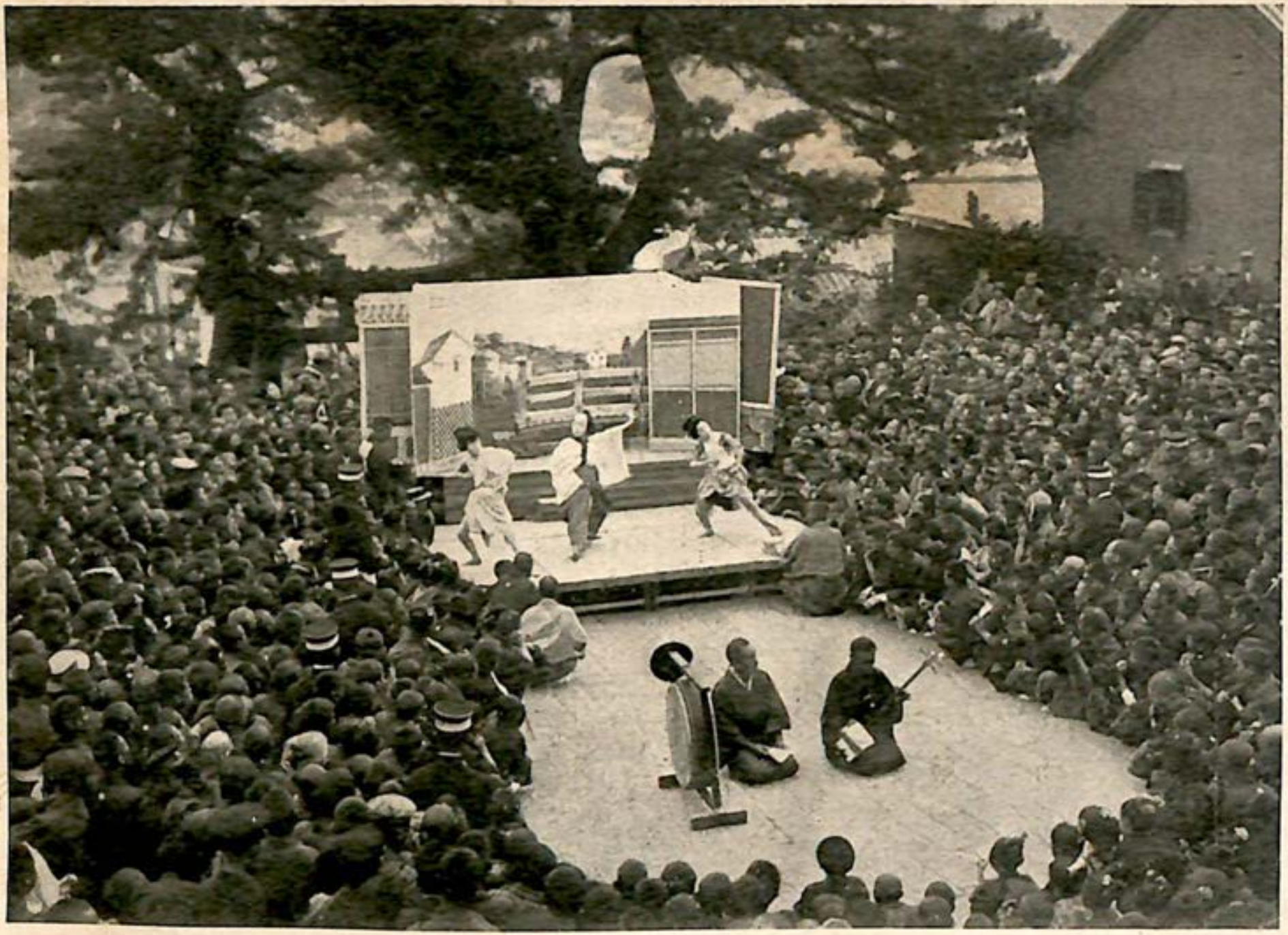
First of all is the government. Great as has been the advance, those who know the situation best will be the last to claim that the situation is satisfactory. In the presence of the foreign foe all domestic divisions disappeared, but only for the time. Now that peace is declared the old estrangement will show itself again. The empire is now under a constitution, with an emperor who has limited his own powers, a ministry subject only

to him, a diet in two houses, with the lower in practical control, and with a bureaucracy which occupies a position of peculiar importance and independence. It is often the real power behind the throne. The situation grows out of the history of the recent past.

In the revolution of 1867-9 three great clans took the lead, and upon its successful conclusion they were in command of the empire. A small minority fought the war, and a small minority was therefore in power. Soon a quarrel broke out among the victors, and one of the three clans withdrew from the coalition, while the second became involved in domestic strife and finally in war. As a result, a group of powerful, intelligent and intensely patriotic men, being few in number, had undisputed possession of all the sources of power. Their subordinates were given the offices in army, navy, police, education, finance; all the places of vital control were parcelled out

among them, and the government was really by the samurai of two clans, Satsuma and Choshu. Hence in the course of a few years was built up a bureaucracy of great power. It still continues, though men from other clans have been admitted to positions of influence, and on the whole the scheme has been widened and liberalized. None the less it has made and unmade ministries and controlled the policy of the empire.

Side by side with this is the Imperial Diet. Its formation was promised in the beginning of the new era, but its establishment was the result of a widespread agitation attended with intense political excitement. It has now been established long enough for the formation of a fair estimate of its value, and this, as perhaps we should have anticipated, has been neither as low as its opponents feared, nor as great as its advocates prophesied. Its life, excepting during periods of war,



THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE AT A SHINTO RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL

has been a continual struggle for greater powers. The ministry is subject only to the will of the emperor, but the Diet has sought to subject it to itself. In general we may say the contest has been between the German and the English parliamentary systems, with the probability at times that the latter would prevail. The peculiar character of Japanese politics has always prevented, for great parties after the fashion of American and English public life are not found, but groups, somewhat in the French fashion. The old loyalty continues, a loyalty to individuals; so that great statesmen have their devoted followers who care little for principles but much for men. Thus the personal element predominates, the real divisions have centred in men, and the incessant struggles have resulted in the substitution of one set of politicians for another rather than in measures of high utility. Before the outbreak of

the late war there were signs that the people were losing interest in the contest, and that the nation would relapse into an attitude of passive complacence whoever should rule. Evidently the problem which must be solved in the years to come is this: How shall the forms of constitutional government be made a reality? Is it possible that the ancient principle of loyalty to the individual can be replaced by loyalty to principles, and can the ancient solidarity of the clan, which so readily becomes the solidarity of a great bureaucracy, give place to the real government by and for the people? Manifestly it is easier to change forms than to regenerate the spirit; and perhaps more has been accomplished already than could have been expected. For elections with free discussions, and a free press which reaches all intelligent people, and the interest in the proceedings of the Diet, are powerful engines for the production of the material out

of which really constitutional and modern states are formed.

But on this issue depends largely the future of the empire. No more in Japan than elsewhere can a bureaucracy be trusted with the control of a people. Government for the people in time inevitably becomes government for a group of men. Neither creed nor race nor excellence of intention can prevent the operation of that natural law. Japan has already shown that it is not exempt. While the statesmen who have controlled it have been patriots of high purpose, yet Tokyo has been filled with stories of "government merchants" whose contracts would not stand examination, and of monopolies of various kinds established by government grants and with profits shared by men who granted them. The results are inevitable in the future, whatever may be the falseness of the rumors now; but there is evidence that not even the patriotism

of the Japanese in its transition period has been proof against sordid gain; while if we turn to the past, under the old feudal system, there is proof in plenty of widespread mismanagement and corruption. The system at the end was rotten, and had it then been brought to the supreme test it would have collapsed as completely as has Russia. The same causes will in time show the same effects, and the hope of escape is through the complete carrying out of the plans now begun.

It is true the Diet itself has not been free from corruption nor from petty and disgraceful intrigue. Human nature everywhere asserts itself in its evil as in its good. But, while the Diet has been far from perfect, and while its members have shown themselves unable to form effective combinations, still its publicity and its responsibility to the people will aid in educating an electorate which shall require not

only patriotism but honesty, as indeed the public already requires these virtues. The one real advantage of the parliamentary system is this: while a bureaucracy may conceal its faults, a parliament commits its faults in the sight of Heaven.

There are commercial problems of great seriousness. Japan, as we have seen, has not been a commercial land, and its ethical code has been that of the soldier. Hence commercial honesty has not been cultivated, and in our age the people are at a great disadvantage. Already the manufacturers and merchants are notorious, and the friends of the people are kept busy with explanations. A thoroughgoing reformation, root and branch, is necessary if the empire is to take a place in peace corresponding to that which it has won in war. The most hopeful sign is that the leading men are awake to this serious deficiency and are seeking by education to remedy it.

On the material side also the problems are very great. Japan is poor, it cannot compare with a third-rate European state, yet it seeks to maintain itself as a first-class power. It finds poverty a check to its advance, for modern civilization is expensive. A Japanese could live in the United States as cheaply as in Japan, but he will not. None so lives here, and our poverty would be a sufficiency there. A man with a dollar and a half a day in Tokyo even would count himself well off, and could live much as he chose. But that is because of the simplicity of life, a simplicity which gives way through contact with foreign ways. Hence there arise a new respect for wealth and a new desire for it. Art has been commercialized, as have literature and the aspirations of young men. But how shall these new aspirations be gratified, how shall even the rightful measure of added comfort be attained? For the vision of a regener-

JAPANESE PUPILS

ated Japan must include a certain advancement in material resources. Already the air of some of the towns is black with coal smoke as a partial answer, while all the natural resources of the empire are studied with scientific thoroughness, and the newly won lands beyond the seas are looked to as affording an outlet for the too dense population.

But with these new methods come new problems, new to Japan but old to us, of strikes and child labor and exhausting hours for adults, of the distribution of profits, of the formation of a wealthy, monopolistic group, of strikes and socialism and the entire list so familiar, questions which Japan must answer as we must answer them, with no royal road for either.

Allied with this is the educational problem. As in politics, the forms of the most enlightened nations are adopted, but the system is handicapped by the use of Chinese, a form

of writing which makes disproportionate demands upon the strength and time of the student for mastery over the mere mechanism of education. As a result the vast majority of children cannot study long enough to gain a really intelligent notion of the world they live in. Even less than our own children who end their training with the primary school can the Japanese boys and girls be regarded as prepared to take an interest in intellectual affairs. They are poorly equipped even for the reading of the newspaper or the most ordinary literature. Then a smaller proportion than with us go on to the secondary and high schools; while, instead of our great multitude in college and in university, only an extremely select minority, very small in numbers, can enter the corresponding institutions. Here the want of wealth makes itself felt, stern necessity compelling the vast majority to forego the higher ed-

ucation. Yet the great majority thus hindered is the real source of the nation's strength, and if trained it would add to it incalculably. Again, none is more alive to the situation than are the leading Japanese, and none clearer in the knowledge that it is a condition and not a theory, a condition which can be met only by long continued efforts for generations.

The moral problem has already been indicated in part, so far as it concerns business. We may not discuss here the question of the relation of the sexes, but it is even more serious. A thoroughgoing reformation is needed in the domain of sexual ethics, with new ideals and new laws and customs. Here is the second blot upon Japan's fame, and here the apologist has a more difficult task, as he cannot fall back upon the peculiarities of the feudal ethics. But here too there are indications of the coming of a better state of things. In Tokyo, for example,

a group of gentlemen of high social position and of correspondingly great influence have formed a league for personal purity of life; in some of the provinces laws have been passed against public prostitution, and Christianity increasingly makes its influence felt.

The general moral problem is also serious. Beautiful as was the loyalty of old Japan, its defects were apparent. As already indicated, it was the ethics of the soldier, with his virtues and his vices. To a soldier all is permitted which is necessary for success, and "laws are silent amid arms," for that which would be crime in the peaceful citizen is applauded in the warrior. Hence in Japan the notion obtained that loyalty excused all else, and indeed that loyalty might require the commission of the most abhorrent deeds. Such a code emphasized for generations could not fail to produce a willingness to admit all means as

sanctified by the ends. With loyalty to lord or country as supreme there could be no "higher law" to which even patriotism must bend, and no more holy ideal which should be held sacred though the heavens fall.

Such an ideal requires an ethical religion, and in our day this is Japan's greatest need. It has been the tendency of the people to worship the wonderful and the extraordinary in nature and in man, miraculous power calling forth the feelings of adoration and submission. This sensitiveness to the wonderful has been a main source of the people's progress. But it must be supplemented by the conviction that the highest is found not in the fire or the wind or the earthquake, but in the still small voice, which is the word of God. Through the Confucian philosophy the conviction that righteousness is more than all success and more truly divine than all wonders was taught to the elect,—to the intel-

lectual few,—but it could not be made effective with the masses of the people. A more potent religion, with its doctrines of the holiness of God, of the righteousness of his law, and of the soul's accountability to him, will furnish the transforming power which shall complete the regeneration of the people.

Finally, because our limit is reached, not because we are now at the end, the problem is how to adopt the new without destroying the old; how to adapt the new and make it the expression of the true Japanese spirit. But this is beyond our province, perhaps beyond human province, and it must be left to the Japanese spirit, the spirit which in the past took the Chinese civilization and made it Japanese, and which, we believe, will take our modern enlightenment and transform it so that the new shall be better than the old, and yet, like it, unique.

IX.
The New World

JAPANESE WOMEN DRESSING THE HAIR

IX

The New World

HE victory of Japan over Russia is an event of more than local or of Asiatic significance; it is a turning-point in the history of the world. For the first time in millenniums has the East defeated the West, and for the first time in centuries has an Eastern power contended on equal terms with a European empire. Not in a thousand years has such a spectacle been seen.

With this victory new problems emerge. The sympathy of the American people was with the Asiatic against the European, with the so-called "heathen" against the so-called "Christian;" but even during the continuance of the conflict voices were heard which in warning tones announced the arrival of the "yellow peril." With peace these voices are still heard, and we are told that the

predominance of our civilization is threatened, and that the time comes when the Asiatic and not the European will be supreme.

Our too cursory survey of Asia, its people and their problems, has shown us how little there is in these fears. India is not yet aroused, and how long a training must it undergo before it can put itself upon an equality with the West in material things! As we have seen, its ablest sons do not ask it; they are content with the "Ultimate and the Absolute," leaving the world to more materialistic and more aggressive men. To make India a factor in an aggressive "yellow peril" would require the complete reversal of its whole stream of tendency.

So too with China, it cares little for the "Ultimate and the Absolute" and very much for material success, but it is not a conquering land. Its people firmly believe that "the meek shall inherit the earth," and it is beyond the

dreams of the most visionary that its multitudes shall set themselves in motion for conquest beyond the mountains and the seas. For centuries defenceless states have maintained themselves upon the borders of the Middle Kingdom,—Korea* and Siam and Burmah,—but the resistless power of the Chinese has not been put forth for their overthrow, and no ambitious general has dreamed of universal empire. To start upon a career of conquest would be to reverse the traditions of all time, and to run counter to the most firmly established convictions of the people.

Nor will Japan lightly go to war again, nor will it be led into ambitious projects of distant conquest. Its leaders are too intelligent and understand

* The relation of China to some of its semi-dependencies is oddly shown by the fact that the Koreans in the past asked permission in vain to increase the tribute paid in Peking, desiring to render it more frequently. But after all there was reason in their request and in China's refusal, for the carrying of the tribute was made an occasion for profitable barter, the merchants who accompanied the ambassador being permitted to take in their wares free of duty, and gaining much more than they paid.

too thoroughly their powers and their limitations. Japan's position as a military power is established, and it will not need to seek for further recognition; its problems are those of commerce and of industry and of all that belongs to peace. It will give itself to these, and will not commit the supreme folly of going around the globe to contend with European powers in their own waters and upon their own shores. If it attempt such an enterprise it will be because it is as foolish as the Russians; and whom the gods first make mad they destroy.

But while few men seriously contemplate the possibility of military aggression, more are apprehensive of a commercial struggle. The Chinese especially, with their patience, industry, frugality and perseverance, seem formidable competitors, while even the Japanese, notwithstanding their want of large experience, may prove themselves formidable when they bring the

same scientific intelligence to bear upon the pursuits of peace as they have already on those of war. But again, summarily and for the moment, let us dismiss these idle fears. The thorough awakening of China is still only among the possibilities, and Japanese commercial aggression on a large scale is also of the future. But granting it all, China progressive, manufacturing, awake, Japan increasing in wealth as it increases in the scientific use of electricity and of steam, does any one suppose that these empires will be less valuable as customers when thus rich than at present when poor? Does the merchant prefer a community which is poverty-stricken and bound hand and foot in conservatism to one which is alive with enterprise and rich in productions? Most certainly it is not in the continuance of present conditions that our hopes for future gain rest, but in the entrance of Asia upon the path of progress, and in its success

in utilizing the forces of nature as it already employs to their limit the unaided powers of man.

If indeed our ideal is the unapproachable supremacy of the white man, if we regard Europeans and Americans as predestined to rule, and if our aspiration is the division of China and the government of the earth by the great military powers, then the victory of Japan is portentous. But such we are persuaded is not the dream of Americans. The arousing of Japan means better things and things which pertain unto salvation.

In the beginning of this book we described the differences between East and West as the result of our mutual separation. Once, long ago, there was no East nor West in the modern sense, but all were one, with differences in degrees of barbarism and of archaic civilization. On the whole Asia preceded Europe in the race, and Europe entered into the fruits of the Asiatic heri-

tage, in philosophy, in science, in religion, in art, and in most of the departments of civilized life. Asia was teacher, Europe was pupil. Then came separation, and after that hostility and a more complete isolation. During long centuries Asia remained unchanged, or slowly and steadily deteriorated. There seemed no inherent power capable of producing new life. Thought revolved perpetually around the same subjects; literature repeated the same stories, centred its poetry in the same themes, and found delight in an increasing minuteness of style and ornament. Government discovered no new system, and wars or revolutions simply replaced one set of rulers by another. In neither rulers nor ruled were great ideals of human liberty or progress produced. So was it in India and in China and in Japan. Under varying conditions, with varying civilizations and varying developments, the same spirit was in all and the same results

were produced. Everywhere the end had been reached, and there seemed to be "no new thing under the sun." The spirit of Asia had exhausted itself; it had no new inspirations and no new visions. Its thought of the universe was of a vast living organism circling round and round forever; over all was Fate, ruling spirit and body alike. Suddenly upon this repose came the foreign invasions, an incursion of barbarians from the outer world. It was all unwelcome, for it disturbed the calm and excited alarm. These men were uncultivated and rude; they were aggressive. And as in the past war had always been because of such incursions of savages, so now violence was the natural accompaniment of this disturbance. In India the people soon submitted to the inevitable, and found that they had gained by the change in masters. In China the rulers put their heads in the sand and refused to look at the world around them. In

A GENERAL STORE IN JAPAN

Japan the leaders, remembering ancient examples, sought at first to comprehend and then to master the marvel. They could really comprehend only the spirit of the West, and they understood that this spirit is not the guardian of the white man, but is the guide of all races, impartial, beneficent, potent.

What really has taken place in Europe and America during the ages of separation which made the white man invincible when at last isolation was no longer possible? The answer is on the surface and it is as true as it is plain. In the Occident man has become at once scientific and free. The first made him master of the powers of nature, the second made him master of himself. It is wonderful how few have been the men and how narrow the line by which modern civilization has attained its present height. A few great scholars discovered the method by which nature should be interro-

gated, and a comparatively few men were born with the instinct for liberty. Yet all our progress rests on these two things. Examine for a moment more closely into their nature.

Liberty in its true sense has been possible only where men are thought of as sons of God. That breaks down the artificial barriers which man has made, and gives equal opportunity for development. But only here and there, under specially favoring conditions, has the teaching of Christianity on this subject taken root and brought forth fruit. Yet how intimately is the welfare of humanity bound up with it! Progress, civilization, the higher life, all these come from men of genius, who are God's best gifts to man. The great benefactors are few, and they come as the breath from heaven, we know not how or when. We do know that genius may be crushed, and that the man of highest gifts in a wrong environment will accomplish nothing.

Now, man has crushed and misshapen himself by tradition, by social customs, by political organizations. He has made power and opportunity a matter of birth and privilege. Now he opens the door and utilizes the powers and the possibilities not of the select few but of all. In such freedom is the hope of the race. Evermore, the world over, without regard to race or land, exclusive privilege breeds corruption. It is not only that the denial of liberty injures the masses; it is still more injurious to the classes, keeping them bound to the system as it is, checking all originality and fostering tyranny and corruption. Ultimately in these conditions the life of a people decays, and it is capable of no high purpose. From all this liberty delivers, and though it has its own perils and sins, it none the less is the prime condition for advancement.

Science goes hand in hand with liberty. It knows neither

"East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,"

but is the product of all times and places and races who participate in the common life which is its source. Science is simply truth and the search after it, nothing more and nothing less. Modern science differs from other science only in method, in its attention to minute details, in its belief that nothing is insignificant or to be overlooked, in the creed that man is to learn from nature and not to impose his guesses or wishes upon it, and in the conviction that the truth of nature is better than all poetry or visions or dreams. Let us repeat and emphasize: Science is the search for truth, for the knowledge of things as they are, a possession which makes man master, giving him the key which unlocks the treasure-house of earth and sky and sea. In the past man has learned in the hard school of experience in a haphazard way; in our day scientific me-

thod reduces instances to principles, and teaches in the shortest and the most effective manner.

Now the victory of Japan simply indicates that it has learned these two principles. It gave up its old traditions which were guesses at truth, and its old forms of organization which were the offspring of a narrow experience, and it entered upon the pursuit of science, that is, of reality. What it has won has been in this fashion. It has no distrust of scientific theory, but it has asked where were the profound scholars, the best teachers, the most successful results. Germany, France, Great Britain, Russia, the United States were all alike to its students, the one question being, Where shall we find the truth and obtain the best? The outcome shows the merits of the method and makes plain the pathway to success.

Is it possible for the other Asiatics also? Why not? Can they follow where Japan leads? Certainly, if they awake.

When Japan again became acquainted with the West, as I have shown, it discovered that it must learn from us or submit to us. So it is with nature and us all; we must learn from it or we must suffer from it. There is no room for argument, nor is there any difference in China, India or America. One rule is over all and one choice open to all. If we learn from nature she gives her treasures to us; if we refuse to learn we remain weak, poor, miserable.

In the presence of facts as clear as day it is idle to argue, and our one problem is, Can Asia be taught to see what Japan has seen? The victory over Russia gives high hopes. All across the continent goes the thrill of a new life. China feels it and begins to say, "What Japan has done we can do." India feels it and there awakes a new sense of patriotism and a new aspiration for a national existence. In every little kingdom the news arouses a sense of pos-

sibilities. To make the situation apparent required nothing less than a world conflict with a power like Russia, whose prowess was everywhere known and whose name brought terror throughout the continent. And on the other hand, only Japan with its intelligence, its patriotism, its intense self-consciousness, its warrior training, its homogeneity and its spirit of devotion could have ventured into the breach and taught the lesson.

What then can be the danger if the lesson be learned? If it be not learned all things remain as before, with a deeper hopelessness and a profounder misery. But if it be learned it is nothing more than this, that man must understand truth and live by it. From that no danger can arise, but from it all blessings and progress come.

Such national transformation will not be accomplished in our generation. With all its energy, Japan has only entered upon the right path, and its

good will be reaped in the dim future. It took three hundred years for old Japan to assimilate the Chinese civilization. The pace is faster now, but let us be content nor ask impossibilities. The achievement will be unprecedented if the end of the twentieth century sees the tasks completed which were set in the nineteenth; and with these completed more will be urgently calling for attention.

India and China present situations far more difficult. The patriotism which is the motive power must be created and a national self-consciousness born. The immensely greater power of ancient custom and of immemorial usage must be weakened, a race of leaders must be formed, and then, instead of a homogeneous people separated by small distances, there are continental empires with endless varieties of speech and race. Slowly then through generations must the process go on, and we and our children and our grand-

A STREET IN NAGASAKI

children shall pass away before it is completed; but we at least may witness the start, and firm in hope we see in faith the vision afar off.

The victory of Japan makes opportunity for the East. That is all which men or nations may ask. America establishes a Monroe Doctrine, saying to European aggressors, "Hands off." Japan establishes its doctrine of like import, "Asia for Asiatics." This too is of prime importance for the world. Had Russia won, Manchuria would not have satisfied its greed, and with its attack on China the other powers would have claimed their share. The last great independent empire would have lost its freedom, and a few great military powers would have divided the earth. Such a thought suggests endless visions of disaster, a real "white peril," for Europe as for Asia. How could so great a spoil have been divided? What opportunity for strife as the birds of prey descended upon so

vast a carcass! What possibilities of evil for the conquerors as for the conquered! Besides, what European nation has such store of capable and honest men that it can spare enough to govern an empire in the Far East? England only has succeeded in part, and India taxes its resources; while German and French experiments do not lead us to wish their extension, and our own efforts in the Philippines are not yet such as to warrant boasting. China, too, is the hardest of nations for foreigners to govern, unless they drop their strange ways, adopt the native customs and ideals, and become Chinese. Japan has freed Europe from its greatest danger and from responsibility to which it is unequal, and it merits our thanks as it maintains "Asia for Asiatics."

For the Chinese themselves the deliverance is great. What conquered people has ever produced that which is great? And China is still virile, with

its strength unexhausted and its powers scarcely yet in their fulness. It has had its proportion of distinguished sons of genius, and why should not the ages to come show their equals, men who shall rival the greatest of the past and make contributions not only to China but to the world?

Let us review our great subject. The Spirit of Asia, nourished by its environment and coming to an early self-consciousness, soon stopped in its development. Its great mission was accomplished in the remote past, only Japan being a nation born out of due time. But with its early maturity it exhausted itself, in part because of the influence of adverse physical conditions (India), in part because of immemorial isolation (China). Without new impulses it had no further gifts to bestow upon man, but was in part content with its attainment, in part discouraged in the pursuit of happiness. For the future it had no great outlook,

but stagnated, its highest thinkers lost in the search for the "Ultimate and the Absolute," its greatest statesmen and generals satisfied with the achievement of personal power and the indulgence of luxury. For long periods the people continued unchanged, or deteriorated to less satisfactory conditions. To them there came no great visions but only now and then revolt against the evil administration of systems which seemed identical with the laws of the universe. Neither intellectually nor religiously nor morally nor materially were there movements which promised better things. No new religion arose, though Asia has been the cradle of all great religions, nor scientifically was there any advance as scholasticism riveted its scheme more and more securely upon the intellectual world. Then came the modern era, when the West, vigorous to the point of insolent aggression, ambitious with dreams of a world conquest, scientific in its mas-

tery of nature, and religious with its ideals of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, came in contact with it. At first the touch was paralyzing and Asia seemed doomed to conquest. But already in India there were evidences of renewed intellectual life and the dawn of a better day in religion and in intelligence. China, obtuse, self-satisfied and repellent, would not learn its lesson, but tried to live within its walls, through which none the less the forces of modern civilization were making breaches. Finally in these last years Japan arose and showed the better way.

The great problem now emerges: Is the Spirit of Asia capable of assimilating the Spirit of Europe? As we pointed out, Japan makes the attempt. Confident in itself, it believes that it can combine the best of both and produce a new civilization better than any the world has known. It is a great effort, with endless difficulties in the way,

and yet upon its success depends the future of the larger part of humanity.

It is not to be hoped that Japan, still less Asia, will be Europeanized. It would be a sorry outcome were the empires of the East to be mere copies of the empires of the West. The ideal is not a dull identity but a true diversity. When one has crossed the American continent he has had enough of the sameness, enough of the hotels and cities and houses built on the same plan, enough of conversation in the same tones and on the same topics, enough of a life which is actuated by like impulses and characterized by like equalities. However good it is, one craves a change and can sympathize with those who, weary of it, regret the new movements which introduce modern methods and ways in the East. But Japan again is our guide. As we have pointed out sufficiently, its early civilization was Chinese but the completed result unique.

As has been said, it first adopted, then adapted, and finally improved. It was too distinctive and too virile merely to copy. So is it with ourselves. What diverse elements have entered into our civilization! what great debts do we owe to all kinds and conditions of men! And yet the result is our own, so that we are already widely differentiated from our nearest neighbors across the seas. So must it be when great nations receive gifts and teaching from others. It is a sign of self-confidence that the Japanese are ready to borrow without fear and to follow foreign guidance implicitly. They know that their national genius will assert itself and that the final outcome will be unmistakably their own. So shall it be with India and with China: learn they must, but modify, adapt, and in their own way improve they will. Thus we shall see a new world, with a civilization vastly superior to any history has known. It will be one in

its acceptance of science, the principles which all must acknowledge, but different in the specific application of the truth, for the clothing of the life will differ with differing races and environments. Thus the new will be better than the old because based on a fuller knowledge of truth, and as diversified as the old because human nature in varying circumstances will variously assert itself.

To such end the various great movements contribute. There was the danger that the West would be untrue to the principles of the religion it professes and attempt by brute force to compel compliance with its ambitious will. But that dream is dispelled. We must now depend upon other means. Conquer the East by arms we cannot; we must depend upon truth, in science, in religion and in commerce. Compel obedience we cannot; win agreement we must by the force of sympathy.

With this outlook we must conclude

GATEWAY TO THE PALACE OF THE PRINCE, TOKYO

by asking what gifts the Spirit of the East has to bestow upon the West. We are already its debtors, but it has more to give. We widen our view of the world as we learn that we are not "the people," but that God has an equal care for the multitudes in Asia, and that they have their rights, their dignity, and their claims upon respect and reverence. But beyond this the East may teach us lessons of which we stand in need. The material and physical elements of our civilization are too prominent beyond all question. Our life is burdensome and complicated. We are intent upon the means of life, and not sufficiently interested in life itself. We are absorbed in the concrete, the external, the particular, and not reverent of reflection, meditation and patience. We are individualistic and personal, too certain of ourselves, too mindful of our position in the organism. The East may correct these errors and teach us that

our life is not in the abundance of the things which we possess.

In the East the organism is supreme; in the West the individual. The Spirit of the East there had finished its course, but coming to us it may lead us away from our absorption in the things of sense and introduce new elements into life and thought; and we shall teach the East the value of personality, and the world shall be the dwelling-place of the children of God. From this union of East and West shall come the higher and better humanity and the new world in which abide peace and truth.

The End

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